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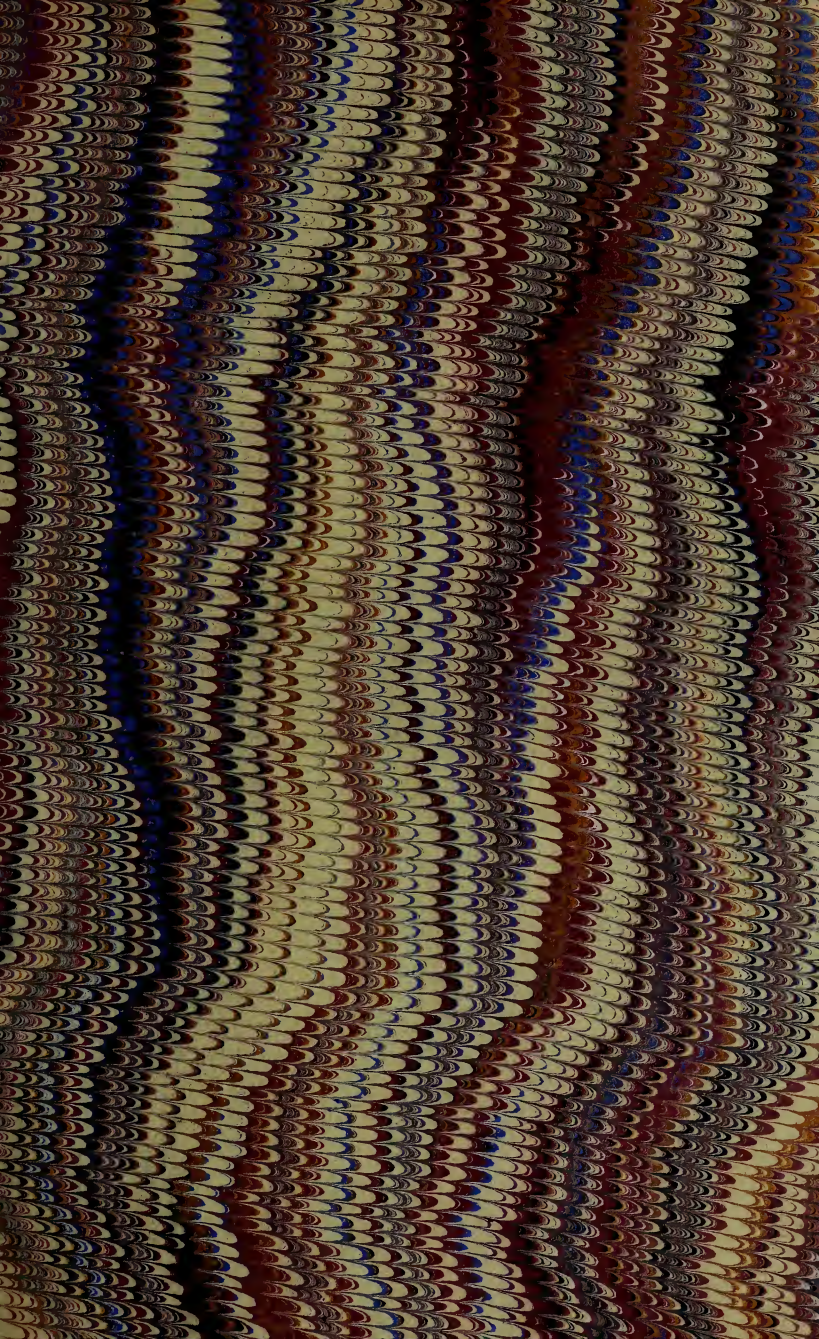
THIRD GRADE PRIZE.

*Presented to Lilian Abraham*  
*for success in the Advanced Section of the Course of*  
*Instruction in Art.*

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T.D. SCOTT, DEL.

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# THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH.

Altarpiece by John Van Eyck, in the Santa Trinita Museum at Madrid.

see page 96

LIVES  
OF THE  
EARLY FLEMISH PAINTERS:

WITH  
Notices of their Works.

By J. A. CROWE AND G. B. CAVALCASELLE.

*THIRD EDITION.*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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## PREFACE.

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Since the first appearance of "The Early Flemish Painters" in 1857, criticism and enquiry have enlarged our knowledge of the schools of the Netherlands. Artists whose identity was not established are now familiar; records which seemed to have been lost, have been found again; and pictures which were thought to have perished are restored to us. The mass of materials at the historian's command has greatly increased.

The mere mention of the names of A. Pinchart, E. van Even, W. H. J. Weale, A. Wauters, E. de Busscher, and C. H. Ruelens, recalls to specialists the most important contributions made to the history of 15<sup>th</sup> century art in our day. To some of these gentlemen, and particularly to Mr. Pinchart whose communications are the more valuable because hitherto unpublished, we owe more than a mere acknowledgment of thanks. It is only just to say that, but

for them, we should still know much less than we do know of Van Eyck, Van der Weyden, and Memling, whilst we might still be unacquainted with such men as Hubert Stuerboudt, and Geerhardt David.

It would ill become us to affirm that a work which was necessarily imperfect in 1857 has been improved to perfection in 1872; but this much may be said without presumption, that, in writing anew the lives of the Flemish painters, we have spared no pains to combine the results of independent research with the fruits of our own more recent studies.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### PAINTING IN THE DARK AGES.

RECORDS of primitive art in the Netherlands take us back to a comparatively late period in history;—to a period as late as the 8th century, during which a powerful impulse was given to painting by the vigour of Charlemagne. At a very early date, no doubt, penmanship and miniature were a favourite pastime in convents and monasteries, yet we possess little beyond the knowledge of the fact; and the most ancient notices in Belgian annals are those quoted from a Benedictine chronicle of the 9th century at Alt-Eyck on the Mæs. In a passage of some length, the writer of this chronicle gives a description of beautiful transcripts from the gospels and psalms made by the abbesses Harlinde and Renhilde, and praises the brilliancy and freshness of their illustrative miniatures. It is not without significance that the convent of Alt-Eyck should have been within easy distance of Mæseyck, the birthplace of two great Flemish painters, and subsequently the home to which Lievine, the daughter of John Van Eyck, retired.<sup>1</sup> We shall have occasion to observe how the art of miniature was carried to a high perfection by men of the Limburg province, who lived as late as 1400, and took their wares to the distant mart of Paris.

<sup>1</sup> See postea; See also *Recherches sur nos anciens enlumineurs et calligraphes par le chanoine J. J. de Smet*, in *Bulletins de l'Académie de Belgique*. Vol. XV. No. 7. pp. 86—8.

It seems to have been within the memory of Wolfram of Eschenbach that lay schools existed in the Netherlands, and there is a passing allusion in "Parcival" to painters at Mæstricht and Köln<sup>1</sup>; but we labour at present under an absolute dearth of portable pictures executed in 1200 and 1300, and such fragments of wall painting as were rescued from oblivion in our day, are mostly too injured to permit of a correct appreciation. There is no field of inquiry which has received more attention in the last ten years than that of monumental remains in Belgium, and it is but fair to state that wall distempers ascribed to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have been recently discovered at Mæstricht, Liège, Huy, Namur, Ghent, Gorcum, and Haarlem.<sup>2</sup> We may hope that these works

<sup>1</sup> Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parcival* MS. unpagged in Brit. Museum; but see the quotation in Waagen's *Handbook* based on Kugler 8<sup>o</sup>. London 1860. pp. 12. 22. 29. 30.

<sup>2</sup> As to the existence of painting and painters at Liège in the 10th and 11th centuries, we may consult Fiorillo (*Geschichte der zeichnenden Künste*) and the life of Balderic of Liège (Pertz's *Monumenta*. VI.); for lost mural paintings at Gorcum and Nieuport, Schnaase (*Kunstblatt* 1847 No. 8.) and Kesteloot, (Notice sur une peinture murale découverte à Nieuport [1822] in *Nouveaux Mémoires de l'Académie de Bruxelles* t. XVII.) "Christ on the Cross," an old picture dated 1305, once in the church of the Béguinage at Diest, is described by Molanus (*Hist. SS. Imaginum et Picturarum Lov. 1570* in Van Even's Thierry Bouts, 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux 1861. p. 7). Of extant wall paintings and pictures the following are notices taken from various sources.

Huy. Couvent des Croisiers. Here is an old shrine with scenes from the legend of the martyr St. Ottilia. Judging from the illustrations of this shrine (assigned to the year 1292) in the *Beffroi* (4<sup>o</sup>. Bruges 1864. Tom. II. p. 31.) this is a flat polychromic series of very primitive design.

Mæstricht. Frescos were discovered here in 1866 in a building attached in old times to a Dominican monastery. According to M. J. H. L. van der Schaaf of Leyden, who describes them (*Nederlandsche Spectator in Journal des Beaux Arts, Bruxelles* 1867. p. 105), these frequently bear a date,—1337—and represent scenes from the legend of the ten thousand

of old and nameless craftsmen will in due time be classified according to their real value; but it may be sufficient for the present to characterize the specimens of mural design discovered before 1850 and note that in so far as they can be considered to represent the art of the darker ages, they reveal a very low form indeed of pictorial culture. As such we should point out the coronation of the Virgin and Christ on the shoulders of St. Christopher in the Byloque hospital at Ghent, a rude performance of the first years after

martyrs, and episodes from the lives of St. Thomas Aquinas and other saints.

Bathmen near Deventer. Frescos in the church of Bathmen were freed from superposed lime and whitewash in 1870. They are described by Mr. Victor de Shiers (*Nederlandsche Spectator* in *Journal des Beaux Arts* 1870. p. 116) as representing the last judgment in two different designs, figures of St. Catherine and St. Gertrude and a repetition of the martyrdom of the 10,000 as at Maestricht with portraits of a knight and his dame kneeling in the foreground. The latter composition is fairly preserved, the others are fragments. On one of the walls the ciphers MCCCLXXIX are said (doubtfully) to exist.

Floreffe near Namur. Here are frêscos in a bad state described by Mr. Ad. Siret as belonging to the 13th century in the cellars of the abbey, of old the halls of the counts of Namur. (*Annales de la société archéologique de Namur*. Tom. 3. p. 361).

Haarlem. St. Bavon. Distempers with figures of saints, of uncertain date on the pillars of the church (*Journal des Beaux Arts*, u. s. 1860. p. 160).

Liège. Fragments in the churches of St. Jacques, Ste. Croix, and St. Paul. (*Journal des Beaux Arts*, u. s. 1863. p. 18).

Ghent. Here are representations of guildsmen in military dress and thirteen episodes from the legend of St. John the Evangelist, distempers "of the 14th century" on the walls of the "Leugemeete" part of a brewing establishment, of old chapel of Sts. John and Paul; fragments in chapels of the Hospitals of St. Jacques, Saint Jean, Saint Christophe, and St. Aubert. We shall note hereafter certain painters of Ghent whose works have not been preserved. — Consult, meanwhile, Edmond de Busscher. *Recherches sur les peintres gantois* 8<sup>o</sup>. Gand. 1859. pp. 164—5, and *Messenger des sciences et des arts de la Belgique* 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1834. p. 200. 1840. p. 224. and *Journal des Beaux Arts*. Bruxelles 1862. p. 15.

1300;<sup>1</sup> and a kneeling figure attributed to an artist of the same epoch in St. Martin of Ypres.<sup>2</sup> Though very little of the original surface remains in either of these examples, we still discern that they were executed by men hardly entitled to the name of painters.

With the mediocrity and absence of skill which characterized monumental tempera in 1300 it is pleasant to contrast the cleverness displayed in miniatures of the same time. We have an interesting proof of this cleverness in a calendar of the seasons forming part of a missal in the Bodleian at Oxford, the miniatures of which are inclosed in very pretty indented squares of various sizes.<sup>3</sup> The most striking features in this missal are the symmetrical character of the compositions, the sculptural gravity and dignified mien of the figures, the simple cast of the drapery, the kindly expression of the faces and their careful outline. The heads are broad and square and heavily bearded; the eyes are gazing and the fingers long and slender. With simple effectiveness shadows of small compass are laid in with great transparence, leaving the parchment bare for lights. On one of the small pictures representing

<sup>1</sup> Ghent. La Byloque. Life size figures. Christ in pilgrim's garb. St. Christopher wading in water stocked with rude outlines of fishes. The characteristic features of this work are want of shadow and coarse black outline. Of the draughtsman's skill there is no trace. This work is not older than A. D. 1300. Compare *Messenger des sciences et des arts* u. s. for 1833—4. Tom. I—II. pp. 201—3.

<sup>2</sup> This figure is altogether repainted and is on a tomb alleged to have been erected (circa 1322) to the memory of Robert of Bethune, but see *Kunstblatt* 1843. No. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Bodleian libr. Oxford. Nr. 313. Douce. In the calendar of seasons forming part of the missal the festival of St. Louis of Toulouse is comprised. The date of this festival is 1317. That of St. Thomas Aquinas 1323 is omitted. This would naturally lead to the inference that the M. S. dates from one of the intermediate years 1317 to 1323.

the Virgin and angel annuntiate, with God the Father giving a blessing from above, the sculptured arches and columns which form the details of the distance are notable specimens of the background filling which frequently recurs in productions of a later time. The larger miniatures begin after the 20th page; one contains the Flagellation and Christ before Pilate, another the Crucifixion, with the wailing Virgin, the dicers, the rending of the garment, and the resurrection; all of which are incidents on a common ground. Amongst the principal figures is a trumpeter on horseback blowing a horn, in truthful and energetic action.<sup>1</sup>

It is a moot question whether the author of these miniatures was a clerk or a layman. The deep religious feeling, and the intimate knowledge of traditional rules which the work reveals might point to a monk without excluding the lay craftsman; but what most characterizes the art is its dependence on sculpture; and we

<sup>1</sup> Other specimens of miniature are worthy of attention. A Bible in the Louvre, M.S. of 1363, contains drawings in the same framings as those of the Bodleian. On the 368th page is a portrait of Charles the Vth of France, for whom the Bible was illuminated. The style is that above described, and the ornaments are very delicate and tasteful. Later forms of the same art reveal the decline to realism and commonplace; as, for instance, in a Latin Bible in the library of Paris (M.S. 6829 fol.) where the ornament is by one class of hands and the composition by another, where the compositions again are by one or more draughtsmen. Of this Bible the first page represents St. Jerome extracting the thorn from the lion's paw. He sits with a book before him in a building elaborately decorated with stone carving enlivened with angels playing instruments. This miniature is a monochrome very minutely outlined and remarkable for the simplicity and flow of its drapery. Some of the miniatures which follow are equal to those of the Louvre Bible of 1363, others are redder and duller in tone and therefore less attractive. After page 34 there is evidence of feebler handling in surcharged ornament, broken drapery and opaque colour.



have to remember that architecture and sculpture in the Netherlands were taught at a very early period by laymen; whilst it is equally clear that men of these crafts, though not unknown in the monastic orders, had potent rivals and, at last, irresistible antagonists in the masons, who supplanted the religious communities by secular organisms equally secret and exclusive.<sup>1</sup>

In what sense the painter of the Bodleian missal was affected by the lessons of sculpture is apparent in many ways. The numerous episodes of one legend confined to a single space naturally remind us of the manner in which reliefs are composed. The stiffness of groups and drapery and the hardness or peculiar projection of surfaces betray the study of carved work. The broad and extensive twilight, the grey and neutral tinge of shadow, the flat colouring of vestments, ornament, and halos, the careful copying of architectural detail, all point to models of stone as seen in the gloom of aisles and porches. Nor is it unnatural that this should be so when we observe how closely the older painter guildsmen were connected with their brethren of the chisel. It was customary in the early centuries to give to sculpture the semblance of reality by tinting. It was thought conducive to finish that flesh as well as drapery and ornament should be coloured. There is no reason to doubt that sculptors were not allowed to dye their own statues and reliefs. The painters who were first employed in this kind of duty acquired the general ideas which regulate the economy of bas-relief composition; its habit of illustrating the numerous incidents of a given subject on various planes, its rigid architectonic arrangement, carved

<sup>1</sup> Consult Vitet. *Notre Dame de Noyon*. 80. Paris. 1845. p. 122.

framings, and dusky tone. Art thus acquired an impress which clung to it for centuries, — an impress equally remarkable in the school of Ghent and Bruges, which owes its fame to the Van Eycks, and in that of Tournai and Brussels, which gained a name in connexion with Van der Weyden.

Not less important as affecting the technical processes out of which modern oil painting had its origin was a custom familiar to tinters of moistening their pigments with oil. This custom was first introduced into Europe, as there is reason to believe, either at the close of the 13th or at the beginning of the 14th century, and subsequently became general throughout the continent.<sup>1</sup> We have rolls of accounts which prove the fact as far as Belgium is concerned. It was part of a contract for the erection of a tomb to John the III<sup>d</sup>, Duke of Brabant, in 1341, at Tournai, that the statues on it should be worked “de pointure de boines couleurs a ole.”<sup>2</sup> It was agreed by the authorities of Bruges in the same century that a chapel in the town hall should be “illuminated” with gold and silver and all manner of oil colours.<sup>3</sup> Jean Coste, whose sculpture

<sup>1</sup> Consult Ch. L. Eastlake. *Materials for a History of Oil painting*. 8<sup>o</sup>. London. 1847. pp. 32—3.

<sup>2</sup> De Laborde. (*Les ducs de Bourgogne. Preuves*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Paris. Vol. I. Introduction p. LXIV.) cites a note to this effect extracted by Mr. Dumortier from the communal records of Tournai.

<sup>3</sup> Jan van der Leye, den scildere, van der capelle te stofeerne (to illuminate) ten Damme, in der steden huus van Brugge, van Goude, van Zilver en allen manieren van olie vaerwe, dier toebehoorde, en eenen waircman van CXXV. dagen wercken up syn selve costen . . . CII. pont.—*De Laborde*, u. s., vol. i. Introd. note to page lxiv. See also, on the use of oil in colours, a letter from Baron Vernazza to the *Giornale di Pisa* of 1794, on the subject of a painting at Pinerolo of 1325, in Eastlake's *Materials* u. s. p. 46, and in Vasari, Ed. of 1848, Florence. vol. iv. p. 86.

adorned various parts of the castle of Vaudreuil, in 1335, bound himself to load them with "fine oil colours."<sup>1</sup> As technical skill increased oil medium was used for flags and pennons on which the device and arms of

<sup>1</sup> C'est l'ordenance de ce que je Girart d'Orlians, ai cautié à fere par Jehan Coste, ou chastel du Vail de Rueil, sur les ouvrages de peinture qui y sont à parfaire, tant en la sale come allieurs, du comandement M. S. le Duc de Normandie, l'an de grace mil. ccc. cinquante et cinq le jour de la Nostre Dame en Mars.

Premièrement, pour la sale assouvir en la manière que elle est commenciée ou mieux; c'est assavoir: parfaire l'ystoire de la vie Cesar et au dessouz, en la derrenière liste, une liste de bestes et d'ymages, einsi comme est commencée. Item, la galerie à l'entrée de la sale, en laquelle est la chace. parfaire, einsi comme est commencée. Item, la grant chapelle fere des ystoires de Nostre Dame, de sainte Anne et la Passion en tour l'autel, ce qui en y pourra estre fet. Item, pour le dossier ou table dessus l'autel III. hystoires; c'est assavoir: ou milieu, la Trinité, et en l'un des costez une histoire de saint Nicolas et en l'autre de Saint Loys; et audessous des hystoires du tour de la chapelle, parfaire de la manière de marbré einsi comme il est commencié. Item l'entreclos, qui est ou milieu de la chapelle, estanceler et noter de plusieurs couleurs estancellées. Item, l'oratoire qui joint à la chapelle, parfaire, c'est assavoir: le couronnement qui est ou pignon avec grant quantité d'anges et l'Annunciation, qui est à l'autre costé. Et en VII arches qui y sont, VII ymages, c'est assavoir en chascun archet un ymage, et les visages qui sont commencez parfaire, tant de taille comme de couleurs et les draps diaprez nuer et parfere; et une pièce de merrien qui est audessous des arches armoier de bonne armoierie ou de chose qui le vaille. Et toutes ces choses dessus devisées seront fetes de fines couleurs à huile et les champs de fin or enlevé et les vestemens de Nostre Dame de fin azur et bien laialment toutes ces choses vernissées et assouvies entièrement sans aucun deffaute. Et fera le dit Jehan Coste toutes les œuvres dessus dictes, et trouvera toutes les choses nécessaires à ce excepté buche à ardoir et liz pour hosteler ly et ses gens en la manière que l'en ly a trouvé ou temps passé. Et pour ce faire doit avoir six cens moutons, desquies il aura les deux cens à présent sur le terme de Pasques et deux cens à la Saint Michel prochainement venant, et les autres deux cens ou terme de Pasques après ensuivant. Accordé et commandé par M. S. le Duc de Normandie, au Vail de Rueil le XXV<sup>e</sup> jour de Mars MCCCLV. — *De Laborde, Archives Municipales d'Orleans.* in Les Ducs de Bourgogne. Vol. iii. pp. 460—62.

knights and corporations were thrown;<sup>1</sup> but mural painting and panels were usually executed in tempera

<sup>1</sup> We find the following in the accounts of the Stewards of the Duke of Orléans at Asti: "16th May 1387. Johanni Imperiato, civi Astensi, pictori, pro XII banderiis quarum sex depicte fuerunt ad arma domini ducis Turonie, et alie sex ad dicta arma et domine ducisse, transmittendis et portandis ad loca bacuarum Sancti Albanie et Trinitatis, jurisdictioni domini episcopi subjecta, per gentes principis Achaye ab ipso oblata, etc. XXII. Solidos VI. denarios Astenses . . . Dicto Johanni Imperiato pro factura et pictura dictarum XII banderiarum XIX l. VII s. Astenses." De Laborde, u. s. III. p. 29. Again: "Fevrier 1393. A Cathelain Bonneret, de Milan, peintre, pour la vente et delivrance de XXXIII bannières, aux armes de Monseigneur le duc, par lui baillées et délivrées audit Cantéleu du commandement et ordonnance de Monseigneur de Coucy LXXIII l. XIII s. Ib. ib. p. 75."

The records of Lille contain the following:—"Comptes Jaquemon depuis le derrain jour d'Oct. MCCCIII<sup>xx</sup>I à Oct. MCCCIII<sup>xx</sup>II.

"A maistre Jehan Mannin (or Mauvin) peintre, pour le fathon des dites banierettes et puignons."

Comptes Jehan Viete pour et au nom de la ville de Lille du jour de Toussains l'an de grace MCCCIII<sup>xx</sup> et II jusques le derrain jour du mois d'Octobre nuit de Toussaint l'an de grace MCCCIII<sup>xx</sup> et III. "Aoust, — A maistre Jehan Mannin (ou Mauvin) peintre, pour avoir peinturé de couleurs à ole ix cappes de plonc seruans à le porte Saint Sauueur, et les pumiaux et banierettes, la ossi seruans, payet pour certain marquiét (marché) de ce fait à lui LIII l. III s."—*De Lab. u. s.*, vol. i. *Introd.* p. lxvi.

The accounts of Anthoine, Duke of Brabant's stewards, for the year 1411—12, contain this entry, amongst others, relative to painting:—"Item. Christoffle Besaen, myns voirscreven heeren scilder, om twee bannieren, II wimple, VI bannieren . . . met finen goude ende met olyen op ziden laken."—*Comptes de l'hotel d'Ant. de Brabant. De Lab. u. s.*, vol. ii., p. 292.

Antonio Bellono, civi Astensi, speciario pro III<sup>c</sup> VIII peciis auri fini batuti; pro gomma, pro colla, tela nigra, candelis, cere, laurio, pertico, auro pigmento necessario pro factione trium banneriarum factarum ad arma domini ducis XXV l. I. s.

Johanni Alumniaco, mercerio, civi Astiensi pro XL rasis seu brassis cendati, pertiti et jalni, et pro serico seu seyta et certis aliis necessariis pro dictis banneriis XXXVIII l. X s.

Christoforo de Almanica, magistro brodure pro factione dictarum trium banneriarum XVII l. III s. Pro eodem per bulletam mandamenti gubernatoris datam III die Aprilis

or distemper as we shall hereafter have occasion to observe.

Amongst wall distempers of the 14th century we shall have to notice some that were carried out at Courtrai by order of Louis de Male. They were inferior, as we shall see, to portable specimens of contemporary art; and they hardly deserve to be noticed when compared with such works as the antependium at the Louvre falsely assigned to Beaunepfveu of Tournai.<sup>1</sup> This antependium is a primitive example, which takes us back to the earliest developments of the schools of the Rhine. The legend attached to it is that it was painted for a duke of Berry and given by Charles the Vth of Valois (1364—80) to the cathedral of Narbonne. It represents the capture, Christ bound to the pillar, Christ carrying his cross, the crucifixion, the deposition, the limbus and *Noli me tangere*. Between the third and fourth compartments is a portrait of Charles the Vth guarded by five angels, whilst his queen, in prayer, kneels in the crucifixion. Of a size calculated to test to the utmost the powers of an early designer, these pictures are all remarkable for faults peculiar to the Belgian and Germanic schools; and as such we should more particularly note the slender and attenuated build, the coarse extremity and projected bone, of the human frame. Gazing eyes attest the relationship of the artist to the earlier miniaturists; pallid tones remind us of a technical handling common to the nameless works of Westphalian craftsmen. But the carved Gothic arches in which the subjects are framed point almost surely to a guildsman of Tournai.

III<sup>xx</sup>I 1. XV s. — *Arch. Nat. Fev.* 1388—89. *De Lab.* vol. iii. pp. 37, 38. Belgisch Museum. 8vo. Ghent. Vol. iii. pp. 37—9.

<sup>1</sup> We know but one artist of the name of Beaunepfveu. He was a sculptor at Valenciennes in the 14th century. See *postea*.



In this, as in all northern works of an early time, we find the *dramatis personæ* dressed in local costume. When studying Italian art we observe that the period of the realists is that in which modern dress is introduced. Conspicuous in the Tuscan painting of the 15th, this habit was known to the Netherlanders before the 14th century. We may suppose that when the lay asserted its superiority over the monastic, element in the Low Countries, it suppressed the traditions of classic vesture, or we may assume that painters were satisfied with reproducing gospel subjects from religious plays. In the rude ages of which we have been treating, policy required that the working man should be kept quiet by artificial means, and one of these means was no doubt the religious festival and procession; especially that in which scenes from the passion of Christ were dramatically represented. There is reason to believe that the clergy and other promoters of these festivals were not particularly careful as to the correctness of cut and form in the vestments which they used; and it may be that artists derived quaint notions of ancient tailoring from the anachronisms of their contemporaries.

Late in the 14th century the "arts" of sculpture and painting, which had hitherto been merged in the larger corporate organisms, entered into a life of their own, and it is curious to register the fact that the guilds of St. Luke at Ghent and Bruges are older than that of St. Luke at Florence. — The guild of Ghent was founded by charter in 1338, and, for a time excluded miniaturists and penmen. The guild of Bruges was embodied about the same time as that of Paris. All these guilds were exclusive; they were shaped on a model common in the feudal ages. Apprenticeship,



for a period of years, mastery and freedom after examination or production of a masterpiece were the well known features of the system. Strangers were admitted on payment of a fine. By-laws regulated the use and quality of materials for painting; there were penalties for bad "flesh tints, gold, silver, azure and sinople" as well as for knots in panels. A dean presided; a court of sub-deans settled questions of law and fact between painters and their customers. Contracts were minute, verbose, and long; they left the painter little or no right to a will or fancy of his own.<sup>1</sup>

It would not be difficult to register a long list of artists whose names are found in the records of the Flemish guilds. We shall have occasion to notice a few of them who were contemporaries of the Van Eycks, but none rose to eminence previous to the 15th century; and it is characteristic that many of those whose trade it was to tint wood carving, were employed as painters of altar-pieces. Of one important fact there is no reason to doubt. Artists found patrons amongst the nobles and patricians, and they received places and salaries from the highest persons of the land.

We are told of Jean van der Asselt, and there can be no doubt of the correctness of this statement, that he was the first painter who had an official connection with the household of the Counts of Flanders.<sup>2</sup> Numerous documents drawn up in the French tongue have

<sup>1</sup> See for this and other particulars *Bulletins de l'Académie de Bruxelles*. 1853. Vol. 20.

Charles the Vth of France granted to the Académie of St. Luke of Paris, in 1390, immunity from "taille" and subsidies and from all "garde de ports" and "guet." Charles the VIth confirmed these privileges in 1391. *Lenoir. Mus. des Monumens Français*. Par. 4<sup>o</sup>. Vol. III. pp. 9—11.

<sup>2</sup> We owe most of the facts relative to Jean van der Asselt to Mr. A. Pinchart, keeper of the archives at Brussels, to whom we here tender our thanks for the communication of them.

been recently discovered in which his name is variously spelt: "del Asselt, d'Asselt, del Hasselt, de le Hasselt." An impression of his seal bears the words, "S. IOANNIS DE ASSELT", from which it would be dangerous to assume that he was a native of Hasselt in the Country of Liège, or of any town of that name in Belgium or Holland. He lived habitually at Ghent where he was employed, in 1364, by Louis de Male. By letters patent of Sept. 9, 1365 he was appointed "painter" to the count of Flanders with a salary of 20 livres *de gros* per annum; and he held that office till 1381, when he was superseded by Melchior Broederlam.<sup>1</sup>

Some time previous to 1373 Louis de Male gave orders for the erection of a chapel in Notre Dame of Courtrai, purposing to make it his own mortuary chapel and thinking to adorn it with a mausoleum, a sarcophagus, an effigy of himself, and statues of bronze. He directed that the walls should be decorated with full lengths of the Counts of Flanders from the time of Philip of Alsace to that of his own accession; and left spaces for the portraits of his successors. It is on record that the chapel was finished and consecrated to St. Catherine in 1373; it is proved by documentary evidence that Jean van der Asselt and André Biaunepveu, a sculptor of Valenciennes were consulted as to the design of the mausoleum; and it is known that Van der Asselt went from Ghent to Courtrai in 1374, at the Count's request. We may suppose that the portraits of the Counts of Flanders, of which fragments are still preserved, were executed by his official painter, and we may take them as examples of the art to which an official painter in those days might be expected to attain.

<sup>1</sup> This fact has been noted by Gachard. *Rapport sur les archives de la chambre des Comptes de Flandre à Lille*. p. 64.

What remains on the walls of the chapel of St. Catherine at Courtrai, after the removal of whitewash and superpositions, is a series of headless figures in the garb of knights and ladies, recognizable as Counts and Countesses of Flanders by the scutcheons at their feet. Amongst Louis de Male's predecessors we observe Philip of Alsace, Baldwin of Hainault, Margaret of Alsace, Baldwin the IXth, Ferdinand of Portugal, and Joan of Constantinople, Gui de Dampierre, and Robert of Bethune. Later and less injured additions to the series are figures of Philip the Good, Charles the Bold, Mary of Burgundy and other princes and princesses up to Charles the IIId. There is nothing in the execution of the work suggestive of extraordinary acquirements. The forms are stiff and archaic; they are unrelieved by shadow and variegated with flat colours only; yet the public of the time was satisfied with the result; and a contract of 1419 shows that Willem van Axpoele and Jan Martens were ordered to copy the portraits of Notre Dame de Courtrai in the Sheriff's Hall at Ghent.<sup>1</sup>

In 1480 van der Asselt painted an "image" of the Virgin for Louis de Male in his hostel of le Walle at Ghent. In 1486 he was commissioned to execute an altarpiece for the Cordeliers of Ghent by order of Philip the Hardy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The contract is in De Busscher's *Recherches*, u. s. pp. 45—9.

<sup>2</sup> Item à maistre Jehan de Hasselt, pointeur, pour plusieurs estoffes qu'il avoit mis hors, du command. M. S. pour faire une ymage de Nostre Dame à la maison M. S. à le Walle ainsi que par lettres M. S. et cédule des maitres d'ostel appartient. LXVI l. XI s. VIII den.—*Comptes de Flandres, de Henry Lippin. Mars 1378 jusqu'à Mars 1380. De Laborde, u. s. Vol. I. Introduction, p. L.*

"A Jehan de Hasselt peintre par lettres M. S. données le XXV d'Aoust IIII<sup>xx</sup> et VI pour I taveliau d'autel que il avoit fait au commandement M. S. en l'église des Cordeliers a Gand

A great advantage accrued to art from the fact that the old dynasty of the Counts of Flanders, which expired with Louis de Male, was succeeded by that of the Dukes of Burgundy, who were of the Royal blood of France. The household accounts of the Duke of Orleans contain numerous descriptions of carved altarpieces, such as this of 1396; “ungs grans tableau argentez cloans et ouvrans, à un Mont de Calvaire dedens en un costé et en l'autre une ymage de Nostre Dame tout pourtrait;” “une fleur de liz de bois, dorée dehors, cloant et ouvrant la ou il a dedans en hault un cruxifement et Nostre Dame et Sainte Anne;” and “deux tableaux de boys a pignon et à arest, argentez dehors.... à une annunciacion dedens et un dieu en croe.”<sup>1</sup>

Philip the Hardy carried to Bruges the habits of pomp and luxury which he contracted at the Parisian court. He strove to commingle Flemish splendor with French taste, and he was not unsuccessful in the attempt. “Truly says Martial of Auvergne “on s' harnachaît d'orfaverie.” Nor was solidity sacrificed to show. Sideboards groaned with plate, and the ducal treasuries were filled with countless figures carved in precious metal, and sparkling with diamonds and rubies. These noble productions of the goldsmith's art were more valuable for the beauty of their form than for the metal in which they were wrought; they served to bribe a lukewarm prince, to conciliate enemies, or, when broken up and melted, to pay knights and archers. The obvious use to which these ornaments might be put suggested the necessity of a continual supply.<sup>2</sup> Goldsmiths, be-

LX francs; payé à luy en rabat de la dite Somme XL francs. De Laborde, u. s. Vol. I. p. 6.

<sup>1</sup> De Laborde, u. s. III. 126.

<sup>2</sup> The following illustration is from Ghiberti. Speaking of Cologne artists, an architect from that city told Ghiberti of

came artists and wealthy men whose attachment it was politic to gain.

"In 1389", says Plancher, "Duke Philip being then in Flanders sent to the king a new year's gift of a purse of gold with a lady in an orchard on it, holding a diamond worth six hundred livres. He sent to the queen a golden picture of the burial of the Lord with our Lady near him, and to the Duke of Berri a St. Catherine of gold."<sup>1</sup> "To the royal family of England he gave sets of costly tapestry," "to the Duke of Lancaster, the History of Clovis;" "to the Duke of Gloucester, the Story of the Virgin;" — presents received with a grateful sense of the honour conferred, but insufficient "to soften or to gain the English mind," or turn it towards a peace.<sup>2</sup>

When his pictures and his sculptures failed to make a friend of England, they were used to ransom prisoners of note. John the Fearless, Count of Nevers, having been taken at Nikopoli, on the Danube, the goldsmith Digne Raponde advanced 200,000 ducats for his ransom: and the King of Mitylene, as the bearer of good tidings, had a cup of gold carved with figures of the Virgin.<sup>3</sup>

Peace being signed with England, the Duke presented the British king with a splendid book, contain-

one who had been at the court of Louis of Anjou (brother of Charles V. of France). "One day he (the Cologne artist) saw one of the works on which he had spent a labour of love melted down to pay the duke's debts. Then his courage failed him, and falling on his knees he lifted his eyes and hands to heaven and cried, "Lord, who governest in heaven and reignest on earth and all that is." Let me follow no other law but thine. Have mercy on me . . . Then he went and shared all he had for the love of God, and he went out into a mountain to a hermit's cell, where he lived the rest of his life in penitence. *Ghiberti's Commentary in the last Edition of Vasari. Florence.*

<sup>1</sup> Plancher, benedictin. Hist. de Bourgogne. fol. Dijon, 1739, vol. iii. p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. ib. III. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. ib. III. 164.



ing a picture of St. George; and gave the Duke of Gloucester an image of St. Anthony.<sup>1</sup>

Led by such taste for display as these quotations suggest, Philip the Hardy must have been surrounded by professional artists of every kind; and there is sufficient evidence in his household accounts to prove that he usually employed a large number of goldsmiths, carvers, miniaturists, and painters. By birth a prince of the blood royal of France, he patronized at first Jean d'Orléans and Colard de Laon, who were exclusively French guildsmen.<sup>2</sup> When he became connected by marriage with the country of Flanders, he learnt to prize the talents of Belgian craftsmen. As Duke of Burgundy he kept salaried painters whose names were Jean de Beaumez and Jean Malwel; as Count of Flanders and Duke of Burgundy his official painter was Melchior Broederlam. We know little of Beaumez except that he prepared tilting harness and pennons, and lived habitually in Burgundy.<sup>3</sup> Jean Malwel or Melluel was appointed painter in ordinary to the Duke of Burgundy in August 1397;<sup>4</sup> but it is stated that, as early as 1392, he tinted some of the first altar-chests

<sup>1</sup> Ib. ib. III. 159.

<sup>2</sup> See, as to Jean d'Orléans, Mr. A. Pinchart's *Archives des Arts, des Sciences et des Lettres*, tome III. 94, and *Messenger des Sciences et des Arts*, u. s. 1868. p. 308. Philip the Hardy paid him a sum of money for an important picture in 1383.

<sup>3</sup> 1394. Jean de Baumez ou Biauviez était peintre du Duc, avait par an (? jour) 8 gros. (*Compte de Guillaume Chevilly in De Salle's Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France et de Bourgogne*. 4<sup>o</sup>. Paris, 1729. p. 51.)—We learn further (priv. communication of Mr. A. Pinchart) that Jean de Beaumez was painter and valet de chambre to the Duke of Burgundy in 1377. He usually painted pennons and tilting harness. In 1379 he completed "un drap de peinture à plusieurs ymaiges" by order of his master who presented it to a nameless monk. He was still living and busy with art in Burgundy in 1395.

<sup>4</sup> Private communication of Mr. A. Pinchart.



carved by Jacques de Baerse of Termonde.<sup>1</sup> Philip the Hardy usually told his orisons daily before one of Malwel's altarpieces—a diptych of wood representing the Virgin Mary between St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, St. Peter and St. Anthony.<sup>2</sup> It was no doubt after his execution of this diptych in 1397 that Malwel was promoted to the office which he subsequently held till his death.<sup>3</sup> His two sons Hermann and Jacques were apprenticed by the Duke to a goldsmith in Paris, and a casual notice of their return, in 1400 “to their native place in Gueldres” tells us that they were Flemings.<sup>4</sup> From 1402 till 1407 Malwel was engaged in decorating the monastery of the Carthusians of Dijon;<sup>5</sup> but he was detached to paint tilting

<sup>1</sup> Comptes d'Annot Arnaud. Archives de Dijon. Plusieurs mémoires tirés de la Chambre des Comptes de Dijon et des Archives de la Chartreuse. 2 vol. 4<sup>o</sup>. ap. De Laborde. Vol. I. Introduction p. XXIII. Notices des objets d'art exposés au Musée de Dijon 12<sup>o</sup>. 1850. Paris. p. 135, and Passavant in Kunstblatt. 1843. No. 54. Mr. De Laborde also says (Ducs de Bourgogne. I. Table alphabétique) that Malwel coloured five altar tables for the Carthusians of Dijon in 1396.

<sup>2</sup> Inventory of the pictures of Philip the Hardy at Dijon in Collection de documents inédits concernant l'histoire de Belgique par L. P. Gachard, 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1834. Vol. II. pp. 98—9. “Item un grant tableau de bois en façon de demi-porte auquel a Nostre Dame au milieu, les deux Saints Jehan, St. Pierre et Saint Anthoine, et le fist Malvel.” Mr. Pinchart tells us (private com.) that this diptych was placed every day before the Duke's praying stool.

<sup>3</sup> “A Jehan Malouel, peintre et varlet de chambre de MS le Duc, III.<sup>e</sup> XL livres qui deuz lui estoient pour ses gaiges de XX livres pour mois. III.<sup>e</sup> XL liv.”—*Compte de Robert de Bailleux*, 1411—1412. *De Laborde*, u. s., vol. i. p. 23-4. Mr. A. Pinchart tells us (Priv. comm.) that Malwel's appointment was made in 1397.

<sup>4</sup> Private communication of Mr. A. Pinchart.

<sup>5</sup> J. M. fut employé par M. le Duc à faire les ouvrages de peinture aux Chartreux de Dijon par lettres données à Paris le 26. Octobre 1407 à raison de 8 gros par jour.” (*Compte Jean de Noident* de 1408 fol. 67. “*De Salles Mem.* p. servir. u. s. pp. 137, 161). Mr. Pinchart (private comm.) tells us that J. M. had been employed at the Carthusians from 1402 till 1407. The same accounts of Jean de Noident, adds de Salles (p. 161), state that

harness for the tournament of Compiègne in 1406.<sup>1</sup> On the 1st of June 1406 he was reappointed painter in ordinary to Jean Sans Peur, for whom he executed a portrait sent in 1415 to Portugal.<sup>2</sup> At his death in the same year<sup>3</sup> he was succeeded by Henri Bellechose of Brabant, who finished for the Carthusians of Dijon two pictures representing the death of the Virgin and the Martyrdom of St. Denis.<sup>4</sup>

Melchior Broederlam<sup>5</sup> usually resided at Ypres and executed orders for altarpieces or pennons in-

J. M. received 12 escus for stuff to make a picture of his arms—a lion seated holding a scutcheon—to be taken to the council of Pisa by “mandement” of April 13, 1409. (o. s.) See also Courtépée. Desc. Topog. et Hist. du Duché de Bourgogne. Vol. II. p. 246 and De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne. u. s. Int. I. p. 565.

<sup>1</sup> “A Jehan Malouel, peintre et varlet de MdS., auquel MdS. en récompensation de ce qu’il auoit demouré devers lui à ses frais et despens tant à Paris comme à Compiègne par l’espace de cinq mois, commencés au mois d’avril MCCCC et six, et fenis continuellement, tant pour aidier à faire plusieurs harnois de joustes pour le dit seigneur et aucuns de ses gens, pour jouter à la feste des nopces de MS le Duc de Thouraine, et de MS le Conte d’Angoulesme, nagaires faites audit Compiègne, comme pour plusieurs autres choses de son mestier que MdS. lui fist faire, le somme de XL. escus d’or.”—*Compte de J. Chousat*. 1405—6. *De Lab. u. s.*, vol. I. p. 17. Malwel also painted jousting harness in 1404. De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s. Tab. Alphab. I. p. 565.

<sup>2</sup> “Mandement donné à Chastillon sur Seine le 14 Nov. 1415. Jean Maluel reçut 22 francs et demi à lui taxez pour la façon et étoffes d’une image par lui contrefaits à la semblance de mondit seigneur le Duc et par lui envoyé au roi de Portugal. Comptes de Jean de Noident in De Salles. Mem. p. serv. u. s. p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> Malwel’s death is registered in 1415. Gachard Coll. de Documents, u. s. II, 99 and Comptes Jean de Noident for 1415 in De Salles, u. s. pp. 137—8.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Bellechose, peintre de M. le Duc, aux gages de huit gros par jour par lettres datées du 5 Aout avant Pâques 1419. (o. s.) De Salles. u. s. p. 242. See also Mémoires, or “chest li livre des memoires de la chambre des Comptes à Dijon” in De Laborde. u. s. les Ducs de Bourgogne. Vol. I. Introd. p. lxix and Tab. Alphab. Vol. III. p. 542.

<sup>5</sup> Brøderlam’s seal on records, says Mr. A. Pinchart, is a shield with three lambs quartered with a tower.

discriminately. An entry in the Duke's accounts at Lille takes us back to the year 1382, when Broederlam was qualified as "my Lord's painter" charged with furnishing the stuff and workmanship of banners and pennons.<sup>1</sup> In a record of 1385 he figures as "painter and varlet of the chamber of my Lord of Burgundy", at a yearly salary of two hundred francs.<sup>2</sup> The time had not yet come when the wants of a large and wealthy public required to be met by minute subdivisions of labour. Broederlam, like most artists of his age, was a man of many trades, and, it would seem, skilled in them all. At some court festival in 1386 we find him thrown by the duties of his place into company with Claus the minstrel of "his Highness."<sup>3</sup> In January of the same year he took sixty francs for painting the Duchess' chariot,<sup>4</sup> in February, 82 francs for two stands of satin colours with the Duke's arms and device "in gold and oil colours."<sup>5</sup> Five dozens of small chairs for the coun-

<sup>1</sup> "A Melcior, le peintre MS. pour plusieurs ouvrages de son mestier, et estoffes achatées par li pour MS. pour faire banières et pignons. LXXII l. XV s. III d."—*Recette de Fland. Arch. de Lille.*—*Quart Compte. Henry Luppin du IV<sup>e</sup> jour de May de l'an MCCCIIII<sup>xx</sup>II jusqu'au III<sup>e</sup> jour de May l'an MCCCIIII<sup>xx</sup>III.* De Laborde u. s., vol. i. p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> "A Melchior Broedlain, pointre de MS. de Bourgogne et varlet de chambre, le quel pointre MS. a retenu à II<sup>c</sup> francs de pension par an tant comme il lui plaira."—*Recette de Fland. même Compte.* 1385. De Lab. u. s., p. 4 and Pinchart. Ms. communication.

<sup>3</sup> A Melchior Broedlain, pointre MS. . . . 1386 . . . . pour plusieurs estoffes à luy commandées. . . .—*Comptes de Jaque Screyhem, 1385-6. Recette de Flandres. De Lab. u. s., vol. i. p. 6.*

"A Melchior Broederlain, paintre, à Claus, le tamburier et ménestrier de MS." XLII liv.—*Ibid.* p. 9. 1386-7.

<sup>4</sup> Private communication from Mr. A. Pinchart.

<sup>5</sup> "A Melchior Broederlain, varlet de chambre et paintre de MS. le Duc de Bourgogne, conte de Flandres, auquel MdS. a fait paier et délivrer la somme de IIII<sup>xx</sup>VII francs et III sols. parisis, monnoie de France pour les parties cy après declairées, lesquelles il avoit par commandement et ordonnance de MdS. faites et délivrées au S. de Dicquemme, pour porter ou voiage

cil chamber of "my Lord" in the castle of Hesdin form an item in his accounts for 1389. He was allowed to charge a considerable sum in 1391 for the manufacture of a "gloriette" adorned with letters and devices, at the same castle of Hesdin; and he was master of the decorations there in 1392. A thousand pennons emblazoned with the Duke's motto tell further of his industry at this period.<sup>1</sup> Of more interest than any previous record in the painter's history is that which shows how Jacques de Baerse, a sculptor of Termonde, in 1392, at Broederlam's intercession received forty francs reward for taking two altar-tables of his own make from Termonde to Dijon.<sup>2</sup> It was in company with de Baerse that Broederlam afterwards produced a number of altarpieces two of which are said to be those preserved at the present time in the museum of Dijon. At the period of this first connection with de Baerse Broederlam was in great favour with Philip the Hardy. "In consideration of good and agreeable service" my Lord had given him sixty francs for the repair of his house at Ypres,<sup>3</sup> and, in February of the same year, paid him a visit, and gave largesse to his varlets.<sup>4</sup>

de Frize . . . pour faire deux estandarts de satin, de bateure de fin or, à oile de la devise de MdS. de Bourgogne.—*Tiers compte Pierre Adorne du 1 Fevrier MCCCIII<sup>xx</sup>XV au derrain jour Janvier MCCCIII<sup>xx</sup>XVI. De Lab. u. s., vol. i. p. 11.*

<sup>1</sup> Private communication of Mr. A. Pinchart.

<sup>2</sup> Private communication of Mr. A. Pinchart. But see also De Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, u. s. vol. I. Introd. p. LXXIII. together with *Notices des objets d'art exp. au Musée de Dijon*, u. s., p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> 1394. 3 Février n. s. Le Duc donne 60 francs d'or à Broederlam "en consideration des bons et agréables services qu'il lui a rendus, pour les réparations d'une maison située à Ypres, qui appartenait à l'artiste". (Private communication of Mr. A. Pinchart.)

<sup>4</sup> Broederlam demeurait et travaillait à Ypres. Par mandement du duc daté d'Ypres 18 Février 1394, n. s. il lui est payé

Under the date of 1394 we discover Broederlam's contract with the Duke for two "retables" carved by Jacques de Baerse. He was to paint them well and honestly so as they might be valued by workmen skilled in such matters. He was to furnish the gold, the colours and other necessary *estoffes*, and all for 800 francs, pledging his worldly goods and chattels the while for the performance of the duty. As early as February 18 we find the Duke tipping the varlets of Melchior, "who were working at a table for my Lord that was to be taken to the Carthusians of Dijon". Before the year expired, the painter received 800 francs for his trouble.<sup>1</sup>

Considerable obscurity still exists as to whether the two altarpieces assigned to Jacques de Baerse and Broederlam in the Museum of Dijon are those which were taken to the Carthusians in 1392 or those which were finished in 1394. Equal difficulty exists as to whether altarpieces to which allusion is made in the accounts of 1394 are identical with those mentioned in further accounts of 1398—9. An entry of 1398 for instance relates to payments on account to Jacques de Baerse for a certain altar table intended for the Carthusians of Dijon, parts of which had been delivered to Melchior Broederlam. A second entry, dated August 8 1399, refers to Broederlam's receipt for expenses of wood and work for cases in which the two altar tables which he painted were taken from Ypres; a third, dated the 13th of August, contains the favorable valua-

une somme. "Aux varlez de Melchior peintre et varlet de chambre de Monseigneur, qui euvrent en une table d'autel que ledit Melchior point pour mondit seigneur laquelle table sera portée en l'église des Chartreux les Dijon." (Private comm. of Mr. A. Pinchart.)

<sup>1</sup> Private communication of Mr. A. Pinchart.



tion of the two tables by Josse de Halle,<sup>1</sup> Nicolas Sluter,<sup>2</sup> Jean Malwel, Jean de Haacht and Guillaume de Beaumez;<sup>3</sup> a fourth, of Sept 12, is a patent ordering payment of 200 francs to Broederlam for his skill in executing "the paintings of the two tables upon which he had laboured so long and upon which he had expended so much of his own talent"; a fifth — the latest record of the master's existence — is his receipt for 200 francs given on December 16, 1401.<sup>4</sup> Upon one point there seems to be no doubt. No valid ground appears to exist for rejecting the altar tables or shrines of Dijon as joint works of de Baerse and Broederlam. For centuries an ornament of the Carthusians of Dijon they might have perished at the suppression of the monastery, but that they were transferred to the cathedral. There they were safe from violence though not from neglect. When taken at last to the Museum the paintings of one of them had been entirely removed.<sup>5</sup> On both we still find the arms and initials of Philip the Hardy and his wife Margaret of Flanders. The carvings of the first are the decollation of John; a Martyrdom

<sup>1</sup> Josset de Halle valet de ch., argentier, et orfèvre de Philippe le Hardy. En 1387 il fait les sceaux. Plancher. Hist. de Bourgogne u. s. Vol. III. p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolas or Claux Sluter is a well known sculptor whose name is in records as early in date as 1384 at Dijon. He was appointed valet de chambre of the Duke of Burgundy in 1393, and he was employed for many years at the Carthusians of Dijon. His contract for Philip the Hardy's tomb, at the rate of 3,612 francs, is dated 1404. See De Laborde. Les Ducs de Bourgogne u. s. I. Tab. Alphab. p. 575.

<sup>3</sup> This was a son of Jean de Beaumez. See antea.

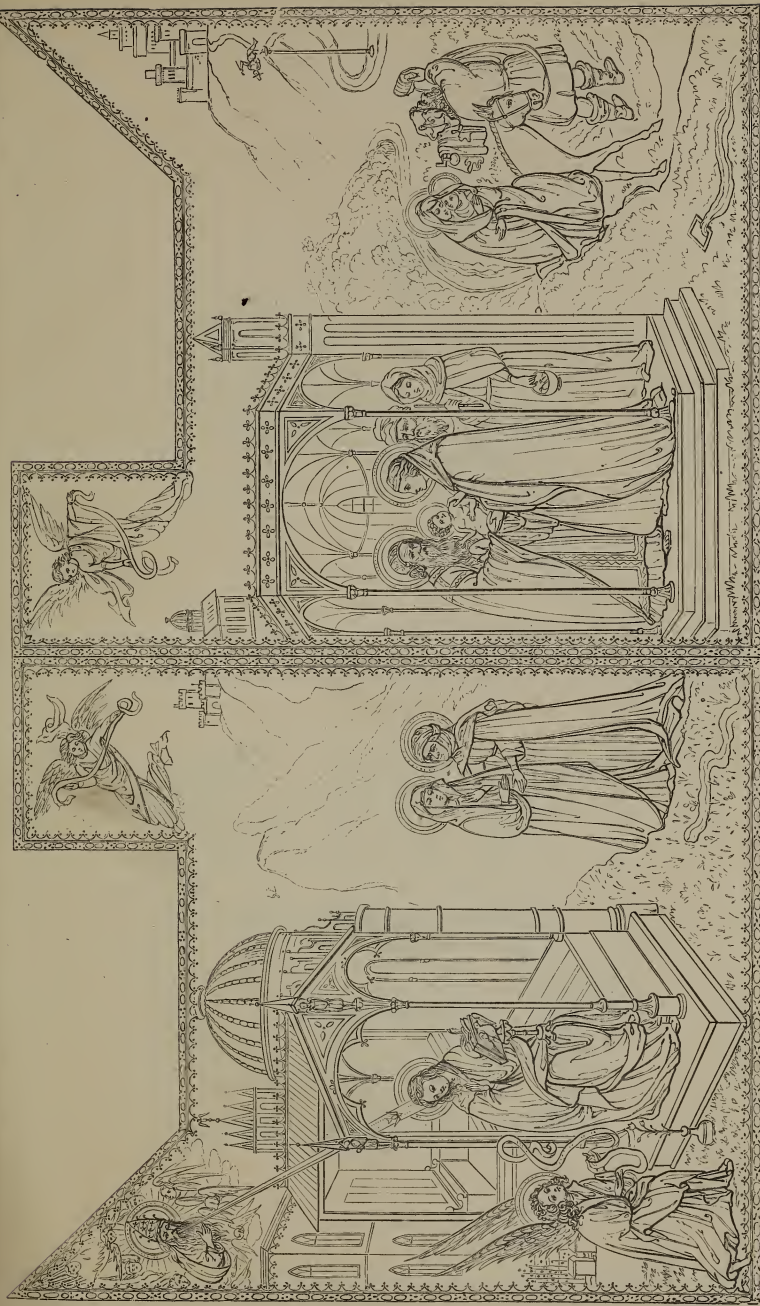
<sup>4</sup> Private communication of Mr. A. Pinchart and De Laborde Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s. Vol. I. Tab. Alphab. p. 546. The only other record of Broederlam found by Mr. Pinchart is one dated 1400, in which payments are made for tilting harness for the celebration of the wedding of Anthoine afterwards Duke of Brabant.

<sup>5</sup> Notice des objets d'art exp. au Musée de Dijon u. s. pp. 135 and follg.



and the Temptation of St. Anthony. The carvings of the second are the Epiphany, Calvary and Entombment, and it is on the outer shutters which cover these that we find the pictures assigned to Broederlam of which a feeble outline is annexed to these pages.

It may be observed that customs noted as peculiar to the art of the earlier Flemings are prominent in the composition of the paintings of the shrine. The Annunciation and Visitation are episodes of one landscape; The Presentation and Flight into Egypt are incidents of another; the dresses are those of the 14th century, and God the Father wears the Papal tiara. The architectural filling, though delicate and neat in its multiplicity of spindle columns, towers, domes, and steeples is impracticable, and set in defiance of the rules of perspective. The golden ray which falls from the Eternal to the Virgin's person, the gilt sky which cuts upon the steep and rocky landscape, the flat variety of red, white and blue on walls and cupola are all reminiscent of the practice of the miniaturists. Again the roseate shades and changing hues, the transitions of yellow into violet; the pale unmodulated breadth of flesh light abruptly striped near the outline with a narrow ribbon of pallid shadow betray the habits of the carver tinter and illuminator. We may admire the pretty composition of the group in the Presentation, the affectionate action of the Virgin in the Flight into Egypt; we may detect in the fall and flow of drapery a simplicity which soon ceased to characterize the Flemings; it may be conceded that female forms and faces are given with a certain amount of feeling and grace; but there is a painful contrast between the common or ungainly shape of males and the comeliness of females; and there is gross incorrectness of drawing in hands and feet, and the wooden nude



THE ANNUNCIATION.

THE VISITATION.

THE PRESENTATION.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

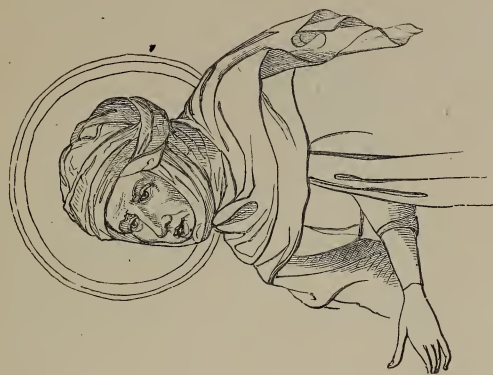
Altar-piece by Melchior Broederlam, in the Museum of Dijon.





THE ETENAI.

From the Altar-piece by Melchior Broederlam, in the Museum of Dijon.



ST. ELIZABETH.





ANGEL OF THE ANNUNCIATION.



THE VIRGIN OF THE ANNUNCIATION.

From the Altar-piece by Melchior Broederlam, in the Museum of Dijon. page 24.







THE PRESENTATION.

From the Altar-piece by Melchior Broederlam, in the Museum of Dijon. page 24.



of the infant. We remain fully impressed with the sense of the chasm which separates the flat and shadeless art of the 14th century from the modelled finish of the 15th. One peculiarity marks the distempers of Dijon as it marks the works of the great masters of the early Flemish school. All the heads, however disagreeable they may be, reveal the painter's effort to realize nature in its wrinkles and fleshy irregularities.<sup>1</sup>

It would be of the utmost consequence to know with what materials these pictures were painted; we should like to be able to ascertain whether the colours were moistened with oils or with glutinous mixtures excluding oil. It is very possible that oil may have been used in the vestments, the tints of which are saturated and strong, but it is difficult to believe that any thing but tempera was found suitable for fleshtints. It seems beyond doubt that a coloured varnish was laid over the whole of the panels, for in parts of them which have been abraded by time we find the cold and pallid grey peculiar to work prepared for a final general glaze.

In considering technical questions such as these much may be determined approximately by a due consideration of the time, the place, and the circumstances under which artists had to work. Clime, for instance, had great influence in all countries on the progress of art, and the means employed in warm countries were found unsuitable for the variable atmosphere of colder latitudes. The painters of the Netherlands may at an early period have felt the necessity of turning their attention to the means of preserving their paintings from the effects of weather and rendering colours and varnishes durable. They may have found, that they could not with impunity leave pictures exposed to the air. They

<sup>1</sup> Dijon. Museum No. 711. Wood. M. 1. 62 h. by 2. 60.

must have felt that the medium employed by the Italians for the preservation of paintings so exposed was insufficient in a damper atmosphere. Van Mander says that "painting with glue and egg was first brought to the Netherlands from Italy",<sup>1</sup> and the Flemings were doubtless aware that in the practice of tempera the Italians themselves differed essentially, according to the degree of warmth of the climate in which they lived. Glutinous or drying matters, such as glue and egg, were used in greater or smaller quantities as vehicle—they were rendered less drying by the use of honey, or of the milky juice of the fig-tree,<sup>2</sup> diluted to a less viscous consistency by vinegar, beer, and wine, according to necessity. All these materials were known to the tempera painters of every clime, and used as they were required. In colouring miniatures on parchment or paper, those who knew the care with which such productions were treasured, did not expend much time in rendering the tints impervious to the effects of the atmosphere. They covered the water-colour simply with a coat of size—*una mano di colla*; and miniatures thus treated remained for ages without alteration in central Italy, where a warm temperature allowed of executing, in the open air, the colossal wall designs of churches, and *Campo Santi*. But these simple means were insufficient in the north of Italy. The masters of the school of Padua, Mantegna, and the Squarcionesques, painted mural pictures in exposed places; but in many spots where these were executed they speedily perished. The same causes operated in Venice; and this partly explains how the north Italians made more frequent use of canvàs than the southernns. In the use of tempera

<sup>1</sup> V. Mander. *Schilderboeck*, 4to. Haerlem, 1604, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> *Lattificio del fico*: Cennini, cap. XC.



the Northerns employed a mixture of colours more tenacious and more lasting than that of the Tuscans. A careful examination of the works of such men as Mantegna, Cosimo Tura, Marcò Zoppo, Crivelli, and some of the Muranese proves that they painted with a tempera of far less body, and on cloths of greater tenacity, than their more southern brethren. Of these facts the Flemings cannot but have been cognizant, and the necessity for increased attention to the durability of their materials must have been impressed upon them with double force. They attempted mural painting, no doubt; for of these, as we have seen, there are extant specimens, though the practice was so limited that we run through Van Mander's pages without finding an allusion to one of them, but it may be presumed that they preferred the system of portable pictures either on canvas or on panel, because they are numerous. Even for these however, it was necessary to consider what technical handling was most conducive to effectiveness and duration, what receipts it was advantageous to preserve and which to avoid. As far as can now be judged of the habits of Flemish painters in the earliest times, they used a tempera of thin substance as being the least liable to work and to crack; they practised the habits of drying by fire or in the sun; they guarded the finished surfaces from contact with air by oleo-resinous varnishes tinged with coloured transparents, if necessary, or as nearly colourless as the use of oils purified by rude means allowed. After tinting of sculpture became common, boiled oil was, perhaps, mixed with the flatter tints of vestments in tempera pictures, but the nature of the flesh surfaces of altarpieces such as that of Dijon forbids us to entertain the idea that they were executed with any other medium than tempera,

first of all because their modelling, their pallor, and want of depth are conclusive in that respect;—secondly because colours mixed with boiled oil—the only drier known in those days—were too viscous to take outlines or permit of proper modelling: and—more important still, too highly browned to suit the delicate tints of flesh.

We may examine other pictures of early Flemish origin than those of Dijon without coming to any other conclusion. There hangs in the Baptistery in the cathedral of Bruges an old panel of the crucifixion by an unknown hand. The Saviour's head is bent on one side; the death agony seems past, yet blue tinged angels gather the blood that flows from the stigmata. On the ground to the right the Virgin faints in the arms of St. John and the Maries, and the martyr Barbara stands with her tower in a niche. To the left is the centurion with a priest, a soldier, and a monk; and in a side niche St. Catherine with her wheel trampling on a prostrate king. The figure of Christ is very lean, lank, and incorrectly drawn, yet realistic truth abounds in the details of his frame. There is more expression, more elegance and simplicity of attitude, a better cast of drapery in the Virgin and Maries than we look for in works of this period in Belgium. The centurion and other males, on the other hand, are short, thickset, and awkward. The whole picture is flat, uncertain in contour, and unrelieved by shadow. No serious difference of technical execution can be discerned between this and the panels of Dijon. The flesh might be more transparent, but scarcely less pallid. The draperies of saturated tone may have been done with colours mixed in oil.

Of the same class, and not unlike the altar chest of Dijon, akin to it, indeed, in character as well as in

treatment, is a dead Christ, supported in his tomb by an angel, and adored by kneeling devotees in the Museum of Valencia in Spain.—There are also some small compositions in the library of Berlin, which in spite of their sketchiness, point to the same class of artists as those who now occupy our attention.<sup>1</sup>—It would be quite consistent with truth, were we to accept the form of treatment described in the foregoing lines as oil painting, to say that oil painting existed in the Netherlands previous to the time of the Van Eycks; but oil painting as understood by the Van Eycks did not mean the mere impregnating of colours with oils and the partial use of such colours in panel pictures. It meant the use of a new medium altogether, a medium which possibly included varnishes and involved a change in technics which it will be necessary hereafter to explain.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Entwürfe und Studien eines Niederländischen Meisters aus dem XV. Jahrhundert*, &c. Berlin, 1830. Humblot. Druck<sup>ei</sup> der Königl. Acad<sup>e</sup>. der Wissenschaften.

<sup>2</sup> Aubertus Miræus, in the *Chronicon Belgicum* (fol. Antv. 1636. pp. 372-3) says: "Many refer the discovery of oil painting to the year 1410, but previous to 1400 this mode was in use, as is proved by old pictures executed in colours mixed with oil, one of which may be seen in the church of the Franciscans of Louvain". M. Léclanché (French edition of Vasari. 8<sup>o</sup>. Paris. 1839-42 art. Antonello da Messina) infers from this passage of Miræus that the art of oil painting as practised by John Van Eyck was known before 1400. But Aubertus Miræus really affirms nothing more than has been stated above, namely, that the custom of mixing colours with oil (not varnish) existed in the 14th century. It is not even certain from the text that Aubertus Miræus used the word pictures in reference to paintings on panels; that word being commonly employed to describe tinted carved works.

## CHAPTER II.

HUBERT AND JOHN VAN EYCK.

THE valley of the Mæs—home of Hubert and John Van Eyck—is noted as classic ground by the earliest historians of Flemish art; and even the grave Van Mander likens it to the vales of the Arno, the Tiber, and the Pô.<sup>1</sup> Mæseyck, where the Van Eycks were born,<sup>2</sup> lies North of Mæstricht at the edge of the barren Kempenland,<sup>3</sup> touching the waste on one side, looking on the other into the gardens and orchards of the country of Liège. To the Eastward, by Dinant and Namur, we see the beautiful landscapes of town-crested rock and flowing river which John Van Eyck so lovingly repeated in the backgrounds of his pictures. Due North, towards Venloo and the sluggard Rhine, are the sweeps of flat country endeared to us in their melancholy by the canvases of the later Dutch.

We saw the Benedictines settled in the neighbourhood of Mæseyck;—as early as the 8th century founding monasteries and convents, and following the favorite

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander. *Het Schilder Boeck*. p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Van Værnewyk. *Historie van Belgis*. fol. Ghendt 1574. C. 47. p. 119. *Nieu tractaet* 8<sup>o</sup>. Ghent. Stanza 102. F.

<sup>3</sup> *Nieu tractaet*, u. s. Here van Værnewyk speaks of the “ruudt Kempen land” as the birth place of John Van Eyck. Van Mander (u. s. 199) also says of the country about Mæseyck, where the Van Eycks were born, that it was a “rouwen oft ænsæmen hœck Landt” in which “there were few painters”. Consult also F. Laet. “*Belgica descriptio*.” 24<sup>o</sup>. Amst. 1630. p. 337: *La Campine du pays de Liège*.” “*Les délices des Pays Bas*.” 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1711, tit. *Hollandia*, in *Brit. Mus.*

pastimes of penmanship and miniature. We noticed the poet who told how Mæstricht, in the darkest age, had been the seat of a school of painters. We shall now discern that some time before the Van Eycks came fully into notice as men of talent in their craft, the province of Limburg to which they belonged gave birth to artists of skill.

Amongst the papers preserved in the archives of France we find an inventory of property left at his death by Jean de Berri, the younger brother of Charles the VIth of France. Two items registered in this inventory are of interest to us. One refers to a book painted in 1410 "by Pol van Limburg and his brothers," another to a missal richly illuminated by the same hands and valued at 500 livres.<sup>1</sup> In searching for examples assignable to persons whose work bore so large a market value, we stumble upon a manuscript of Josephus in the Library of Paris of which it is told that it was illuminated by the "limners" of Jean de Berri and Jean Fouquet of Tours.<sup>2</sup> Of the first three miniatures there is no mistaking the period. The

<sup>1</sup> Pol Van Limburg was in the service of Jean de Berry from 1400 to 1416. The inventory of property left at his death by that prince in the latter year is preserved in the Bib. Ste. Geneviève, Paris, it contains the following entry: "Folio 267 verso. Item: un livre contrefait d'une pièce de bois paint en semblance d'un livre ou il n'y a nulz feuillez, ne rien escript, couverts de veluzan et blanc à deux fermoers d'argent esmaillé aux armes de Monseigneur, le quel livre Pol de Limbourg et ses deux frères donnèrent à mondit seigneur aux estraines mil CCCC. et dix. Pris. XL. l. paris." "Item, en une layette, plusieurs cayers d'une très riches heures que faisait Polet ses frères très richement historiées et enluminées" prisées V<sup>c</sup>. Liv. *De Laborde. La Renaiss. des Arts.* 8<sup>o</sup>. Paris 1850, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Imperial Library—Paris. MSS. 6891. Title—"Antiquité des Juifs par Joseph"—"Les trois premières miniatures sont de l'enlumineur du Duc Jehan de Berry, et les 11 autres de la main du bon peintre du roi Louis XI Jehan Fouquet natif de Tours. Size 8 inch. folio.



first of them represents Christ, in a rose coloured mantle, supported by angels on pedestals, uniting Adam and Eve under a rainbow. The waters of life well out in front of the group from an octagonal fountain, swarming with fishes, and bathing a bank alive with quadrupeds. Above the rainbow in which angels carry the symbols of the hammer, trowel, level, and set square, the Eternal holds a compass and gives a benediction whilst the sky is darkened by flights of birds. Foliated ornament of great delicacy forms a framework of blue and gold to the picture. There are so many peculiarities in this miniature that point to the nationality and character of its author that we cannot think it inappropriate to assign it to a Fleming; and as Pol van Limburg was apparently a Fleming and certainly employed by the Duke of Berri to whom the *Josephus* belonged, we may naturally presume that he painted it. That he was a mason there is some ground for believing; that he was an artist acquainted with models known to the Van Eycks is certain. In the pensive gravity of the Eternal, and in the persons of Adam and Eve, we have the types which subsequently become familiar to us in the famous altarpiece of the mystic Lamb. The figures are well proportioned, but marred; as figures are frequently marred in the Netherland schools, by heavy limb or coarse articulations and extremities. We trace the pure realist in close imitations of flesh detail, wrinkles, and muscular projections. What we miss is the powerful tone and modelled finish of the Van Eycks for which clearlights and cold rosy halftints merging into pallid violet shadows are but poor and unpleasant substitutes. Two pictures immediately following represent Joseph's departure and sale, and are executed with less care and

taste than the creation. Simplicity of line and energy of expression are frequently united with varied movement and a graceful flow of drapery; but the dresses are most in the spirit of those in the altar chest at Dijon. The dominant tones are rosy and ashen; and the carnations are too markedly modelled into red half tints and greenish shadows to be perfectly satisfactory.<sup>1</sup> To the period in which this beautiful example was produced we are guided by another specimen of the same art, "les Heures du duc de Berri," a missal finished in 1409 and now in the Paris library.<sup>2</sup> The miniatures here are nearly as good as those of the Josephus and marked by similar features; and we may particularly admire the earliest, which are placed in ornament perfect of its kind, and represent the missions of St. Peter and St. Paul.<sup>3</sup> If

<sup>1</sup> Not to waste too much space in describing subjects, they may be stated in a few words. Min. p. 25. Joseph and his brethren kneeling at the feet of a female.—Joseph thrust into the well. Joseph sold.—P. 49. Joseph presented to Pharaoh. The remaining miniatures by Fouquet, are inferior to the three first. P. 70. "A combat." Coarse labour; sad colour, red touches in the flesh tints, no energy of design; abuse of gold ornament; bad drawing. Many spaces remain open as if for miniatures that were never to be attempted.

<sup>2</sup> Title. "Codex membran. quo continetur liber precū Joh<sup>s</sup> Ducis Bituriciensis. Occurrunt passim figuræ non inelegantes. Is codex an<sup>o</sup>. 1409 exaratus est (Cat. cod. mss. bib. reg. p. 3. Tom. 3. Paris. MDCCXLIV. No. 919.)

<sup>3</sup> These miniatures are not without quaintness. Two subjects separated by garland work occupy the first sheet. On the upper space the hand of the Eternal appears from a cloud and gives a blessing to St. Paul, who kneels in prayer. Near the saint is a fortalice out of which a female figure leans bearing a cross. The crown on her head denotes some exalted personage. At the foot of the fortalice a naked female with a vase pours water on ground, the barrenness of which is denoted by dead and leafless trees. All this, no doubt symbolizes the mission of Paul the fertilizing spirit of Christianity.

St. Peter raising the mantle of Jeremiah forms the subject of the lower miniature. Both are dressed in long vestments of easy and simple folds. Other miniatures representing pro-

we inquire where Pol van Limburg learnt the lessons of his craft, we find no response in any historical record, yet it may be presumed that, had the country of Liège at the close of the 14th and during the 15th century been spared the indignities and ravages of the wars of succession, many documents would probably be found in Liège and the towns of the Meuse to tell of artistic activity; and what is equally important, many pictures of the Van Eycks or their predecessors would remain to enlighten us as to the beginnings of their art.

We have no authority for the birth of Hubert and John van Eyck, except a passage in Van Mander to the purport "that so far as one can tell Hubert was born about 1366 and John some years later."<sup>1</sup> Vasari's statement that Hubert in 1410 invented a new method of colouring in oil<sup>2</sup> gives small clue to the painter's age,

phets and apostles fill the subsequent leaves. In all, we meet with square energetic forms of features, and heads like those in the Josephus. The figures are painted in the vague, clear colours of flesh tints, the changing roseate and violet keys of harmony marked as characteristic of the Limburg brothers. It may be that the artists were educated by Pol van Limburg. The work is sufficiently good to have been executed by the younger brothers, but the hand cannot be traced with certainty. It is perfectly evident also that numerous artists were employed in the completion of this missal. After the 6th page the style slightly changes; the miniatures are larger and fill the page. The first of them represents the Virgin receiving the lamb from St. John, and is filled with figures presented under a pleasing and noble aspect, natural in attitude and habited in vestments of simple folds. One of the most prominent in one group, a mitred dignitary, gives weight to the composition by his colossal stature and square head. This marks a want of the sense of unity in the artist and gives character to the miniature.

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Vasari did not mention Hubert Van Eyck in the original edition of his work. This omission was corrected in a second edition in the following words: "Lasciando adunque da parte Martino d'Olanda, Giovanni Eick da Bruggia, ed Huberto, suo fratello, che nel 1510 (1410) mise in luce l'invenzione et modo

though, if taken in corroboration of Van Mander, it would show that Hubert was forty-four years old when the modern process of oil medium was carried to perfection.<sup>1</sup> The annals of continental history in the twenty years subsequent to 1400 contain little more than descriptions of war and plunder, the feuds of Burgundy and Armagnac, the massacre of Montereau, the revolt of Liège, the British invasion, and the battle of Azincourt. As Jean Sans Peur succeeded to the throne of Philip the Hardy there was talk of little else than strife; and the treasures of the goldsmiths' and painters' art which had been hoarded by the dukes of Burgundy were pawned or sold to pay their men at arms. During the revolt of Liège in which most of the towns on the Mæs took part, there was hardly a place that escaped burning or pillage, Mæstricht was sacked and Mæseyck probably shared its fate;<sup>2</sup> Nor is it to be wondered that under such circumstances Van Mander should confess that he knew not from whom Hubert *di colorire a olio . . .*" "Mise," Sir C. Eastlake truly said, "strictly refers to Hubert alone." Eastlake. *Materials*, u. s. p. 191. The older narrative remains unaltered.

<sup>1</sup> We may suspect that the Van Eycks have been usually considered older than they were. Accepting the date of 1410 as that of the perfection of oil medium, and taking John Van Eyck to have been 20, and Hubert about 40, the latter would have been born about 1370, the former about 1390, but who vouches for the correctness of the date of 1410. Vaernewyk (*Historie*, u. s. p. 119), V. Mander, (u. s. p. 199), point out two figures in the altarpiece of St. Bavon, as portraits of Hubert and John Van Eyck. These portraits have been generally considered authentic and J. H. Wierx engraved them. The apparent difference of age in both is twenty years. "John," says Van Mander, "was younger than his brother, who was an older man than he."

<sup>2</sup> Mæseyck was subjected to heavy punishment, and, it is said, destroyed in 1468, when Dinant and thirty other towns were captured and pillaged in the wars ending with the subjection of Liège to the Duchy of Burgundy (Vaernewyk *Hist. v. Belgie*, u. s. 119. Guicciardini. *Description de tous les Pays Bas* 8<sup>o</sup>. Amsterdam. 1641. pp. 586—92.)

learnt his craft.<sup>1</sup> Would it not have been strange if the Van Eycks, who were followers of an eminently peaceful profession, had neglected to retire as early and as speedily as possible to the security of the larger Flemish cities. If we consult Opmeer who compiled his "Opus chronographicum" in 1569, and if we literally construe a passage in his work, it will appear that both Hubert and John Van Eyck were resident at Ghent in 1410.<sup>2</sup> But there is no certainty that the date accepted by Opmeer is correct; and it may be safer for many cogent reasons to adopt a later one. According to the rules of the guild of St. Luke at Ghent no stranger could practise the art of painting without being a burgess of the city and a freeman of the guild.<sup>3</sup> The registers of this corporation were destroyed in the 16th century, but copies of it which survived the great

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Opmeer (Petrus). *Opus chronographicum*. 12<sup>o</sup>. 1611. p. 405. 1410. "Hac tempestate floruerunt Gandavi Joannes Eickius, cum Huberto, fratre suo majore natu, summi pictores. Quorum ingeniis primum excogitatum fuit colores terere, oleo seminis lini."

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Goetghebuer furnished abbé Carton of Bruges with copies of entries in the register of a brotherhood called "Onser Vrouw ter Radien" at Ghent, one of which is to the effect that "Meester Hubrech van Hyke" was affiliated in 1412, and Mergriete v. Hyke in 1418. (Carton. in *Annales de la Société d'Emulation de Bruges*. Tome 5. Serie 2. 8<sup>o</sup>. Bruges. 1847. p. 325). According to Mr. Ch. Ruelens (Notes et additions annexed to O. Délepière's translation of this work), the register is a forgery. Yet in spite of this we may hold that the Van Eycks lived at Ghent at least before 1418.

We must also quote the following record, which tends to prove that Hubert was at Ghent earlier than 1424:

"Sente Bamesse, anno XIII<sup>c</sup> en XXII was Hubrecht Van Eycke, gulde broeder Van Het Onser Vrouwe Gulden, up de rade van den Chore van Sint Jans te Ghend. Register of the Brotherhood O. V. Ghent communicated by Mr. Goetghebuer. Vid. Carton. *Ann. de Bruges*, *infr.* p. 28. But there are unhappily serious doubts as to the genuineness of the record from which this quotation was made. (See Pinchart. *Annotations*, u. s. p. CCXIV.)



troubles were searched for the formal matriculation of the Van Eycks in vain. There were certain conditions however under which it was possible for strangers to avoid the penalties enforced on evasion or neglect of the guild laws, and these were service under a member of the ducal family. For some time previous to 1419 Ghent was the habitual residence of Philip of Burgundy then count of Charolois, and his wife Michelle de France; and it is not improbable that Hubert van Eyck was connected in some way with the Count of Charolois and that John Van Eyck enjoyed the privilege of exemption as his assistant. We may thus explain the absence of both artists from the registry of the corporation.<sup>1</sup>

Facius relates that John Van Eyck learnt the properties of colours from Pliny and others.<sup>2</sup> If this be not a figure of speech, the study of chemistry to which John devoted himself was a natural result of a previous study of the classical languages. Where and under what circumstances this education was acquired has not been handed down to us, but as John was much younger than his brother, it seems natural that he should have been taught by Hubert. A man capable of imparting instruction of this kind would be eminently fitted to hold a high station in the house of a prince like Philip or of a princess like Michelle de France. A dramatic episode of these times incidentally illustrates the life of the heir apparent to the Burgundian throne at Ghent. It was in the year 1419. There were

<sup>1</sup> We shall find proofs of privileges vested in the ducal painters in the life of *Cristus postea*.

<sup>2</sup> Facius (B.) *De viris illustribus*. 4<sup>o</sup>. Florence. 1715. p. 46. Vasari has the same story. He says: (*Lemonnier Edition*. Vol. IV. p. 75). "*Si dilettaua dell' archimia,*" and Van Mander (u. s. p. 199), "*Hy was [so eenighe meenen] oock een wijs geleert man.*"

rumours of peace abroad, the more grateful as they seemed to herald the cessation of a long period of strife. It was said that Jean Sans Peur and the Duke of Orléans would meet and be reconciled at Montereau. Events took a turn which seemed to warrant the most sanguine expectations. Unhappily treachery lurked under this semblance of friendship. Jean Sans Peur came honestly, it is thought, to give his hand to his cousin. He was set upon and killed in a brutal and cowardly manner. Philip was at Ghent when the news of the murder arrived; the victim was his father, the murderer was his wife's brother. We may picture the scene in Charolois' palace. "Si fu," says Chastelain "toute la maison emmeublée de hélas."<sup>1</sup> A painful mishap quickly followed upon the perpetration of this crime. Michelle de France pined under the suspicions of Philip and died in 1521. At her death it was considered a grateful tribute to her memory "to grant the freedom of the guild to her favorite painters the two Van Eycks." It is true that the entry to this effect in the registers of the guild is found in a copy of the 16th century which is not free from suspicion of interpolation; but there is something so natural and so apparently truthful in the story that it seems convincing; and no valid ground has been given for disbelieving it.<sup>2</sup> As Philip of Charolois heard of the violent death of

<sup>1</sup> *Chronique de Chastelain*, p. 18. in Buchon's *Panthéon Littéraire*. 8°. Paris. 1837.

<sup>2</sup> "In zelve jaer (1519) starf vrouw Michiele, ghesellenede van hertoghe Philips, omme hare dootd was binnen Ghent grooten rouwe, Hubrecht en Jan, die sy zeer lief hadde, schonk den ambachte vrydomme in schilderen. Reg. of the Guild of St. Luke. *Bulletins de l'Acad. de Brux*, u. s. 1853. Vol. XX.

To this quotation it is that Ruelens (*Notes et additions*, u. s.) and Pinchart (*Annotations*, u. s. p. CXIII) observe that it is not trustworthy because it is made from a copy of the registers of the guild of St. Luke not older than 1584. But we have already

his father (September 10, 1419), he took horse and rode towards Malines to concert measures of revenge with his friends and adherents. The first person he went to meet was John of Bavaria, then Count of Holland and Luxemburg. It was with this prince that John Van Eyck a few years later was induced to take service.<sup>1</sup>

John of Bavaria was elected to the bishopric of Liège in 1390, and clung to that dignity through many vicissitudes till 1417, when, hearing of the death of his brother William the Vth, he started on the well known expedition in which he robbed his niece Jacqueline of her rights and installed himself as Count of Holland at Dordrecht. In 1418 he married the Duchess of Luxemburg, widow of Anthoine de Bourgogne, duke of Brabant and Limburg, whilst Jacqueline, whom he had dispossessed, became the wife of John the IVth, Duke of Brabant. In August 1419 John of Bavaria journeyed into Holland and finally settled at the Hague, where he resided till his death on the 5th of January 1425.<sup>2</sup>

In the long list of knights and officers, of chamberlains, pages, minstrels and servants who figured at the court of the Hague, we find the name of John Van Eyck

observed that painters were clearly free from the constraint of the guild when in the service of the Ducal family, as is proved in the case of Pierre Coustain at Bruges in 1471. (Beffroi, u. s. I. 205.)

<sup>1</sup> See postea the commission of Philip the Good, in which John Van Eyck is appointed "Varlet" and described as "pointre et varlet de chambre de feu M. S. le Duc Jehan de Bayviere."

<sup>2</sup> For John of Bavaria consult A. Pinchart, Annotations (appended to O. Délepierrès translation of the 1st Edition of the present work.) Complément du Tome II. pp. CXC and follg. Consult also Olivier de la Marche, Memoires I. 24 in Petitot. 8<sup>o</sup>. Paris. 1825. Vol. IX. Foullon, Hist. Leod. Leod. fol. 1730; the Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet, fol. Paris. 1595; and Polain's Modern History of Liège.

qualified as "*myns genadichs heeren scilder*," our gracious Lord's painter; and copious records in the archives of Northern Holland show that he was in receipt of a regular daily salary for nearly two years.

The earliest reference to John's stay at the Hague is contained in the accounts of Henri Noothaft, treasurer of Holland, for the quarter beginning September 23, 1422, and ending January 13, 1423. According to an entry in these accounts "John the painter" received for himself and for his "servitor", for nine weeks and three days at the rate of "ten lions" per day, "five livres and ten sous de gros." In subsequent entries, registered by Noothaft and his successors, payments of wages to John Van Eyck occur without interruption till the 11th of September 1424, when they cease altogether. It would thus seem that the connection of our artist with John of Bavaria was temporary: and it may appear that he was called to the Hague to decorate the chapel or halls of the count's palace which underwent alterations and received important repairs at this period.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As we are entirely indebted to the kindness of Mr. Alexandre Pinchart, one of the keepers of the records at Brussels, who searched the archives of Holland fully in 1864, for the facts stated in the text, we here copy the whole of this gentleman's statement, as proof: "In the accounts of the treasurer Gerard van Heemskerck (8th Oct. 1420 to 15th of April 1421) at the Hague, a special section is given to wages and pensions. Amongst the few persons named in this section we find the goldsmith Jacques of the Hague and the poet Barthelemi; we do not find John Van Eyck. The accounts of April 16 to June 6, 1421, drawn up by Jacques Seigneur de Gaesbeke, do not name John Van Eyck as a member of the Count's household. The accounts for June 7 to Aug. 18 are lost. Those which comprise August 19 to Dec. 25, are silent as to John Van Eyck; those immediately following are missing. On the 4th of April 1422 Henri Noothaft was appointed treasurer of Holland. His first register of accounts runs from the day of his appointment to the 26th of Sept. 1422. In the second, which takes in the time from Sept. 27, 1422 to January 13, 1423 we find the following entry: "Disbursed and paid to master Jean the painter for his

That John Van Eyck should have spent almost two years of his life at the Hague; and yet that the fact should have remained unknown to historians is characteristic. That the works which he executed there should have been forgotten and lost is greatly to be regretted; a residence of so many months in the capital of Holland must have changed the current of artistic feeling at the Hague; it naturally accounts for the influence which the Van Eyck school notoriously wielded on Dutch art in the 15th century.

It has been related, and was long believed, that John Van Eyck visited Antwerp in 1420 and prepared an agreeable surprise for the painters of that city by show-wages and those of his servitor during nine weeks and three days at the rate of 10 lions per day: 5 livres 10 sous de gros." That this Jean is Van Eyck, is clear for we find him in other entries called 'Johannes Myns genadichs heeren scilder.' As it is not stated for what time Jean is paid, we can only determine the dates by reference to subsequent accounts. Two of these—one of Noothaft's, extending from March 11 to Oct. 31, 1423, another of Bauduin van Zwieten, his successor, from Nov. 1, 1423, to May 1, 1424,—give us evidence that John received his pay regularly from Dec. 29, 1422, till the 31st of January 1424. Dating back from Dec. 29, 1422, and counting nine weeks and three days from that day, we get at the 24th of October 1422, as the beginning of the painter's receipt of salary.

As to the time of Van Eyck's leaving the service of John of Bavaria, we gather the following. The second account of Bauduin van Zwieten extends from May 26, 1424, to Feb. 5, 1425. It comprises payments to the painter for thirty two weeks; therefore from the 1st of February of the Leap year 1424 to the 11th Sept. of the same year we have the exact amount of days for which Van Eyck was paid; and we gather the date of his leaving John of Bavaria's service. John of Bavaria died on the 5th of January 1425, so that Van Eyck left his service a little more than three months before the Prince's death. It is further stated in the accounts, ex. gr. in Dec. 1422, that the "painter Johannes" had two "servitors." We should take these to be his assistants; and there is every reason to believe that the work they were put to was to decorate with paintings the chapel or certain rooms of the palace at the Hague to which John of Bavaria made important changes that remained unfinished at his death."



ing them a head of Christ executed in oil. The baselessness of this story has been recently proved to our entire satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> There may be more truth in the statement that, about this time, Van Eyck completed the likenesses of Jacqueline of Holland and Jean Sans Peur, of which the mere tradition has been preserved.<sup>2</sup>

It is not an improbable conjecture that John Van Eyck's appointment to an independent place in the house of John of Bavaria severed the partnership in which he had lived till then with his brother. Hubert now laboured alone, and successfully, as is proved by entries in the accounts of the city of Ghent. In 1424 he received payments for sketches furnished to the "echevins", and he was visited in state by the magistrates of the city.<sup>3</sup> In autumn 1424 John Van Eyck left the service of Jean de Bavière; on the 19th of May 1425 he was appointed painter and varlet de chambre to Philip the Good.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "Notice sur l'Académie d'Anvers publiée par Mr. J. R. L. van Kirchhoff. Anvers. 1824, and Mr. Pincharts refutation of the story in "Annotations, u. s. p. CXCIH.

<sup>2</sup> L'Armessin's series of engravings comprises a likeness of Jean Sans Peur from a portrait by John Van Eyck, the original of which is missing.—In the Museum of Copenhagen there hangs a bust portrait (No. 180, wood, 2 f. 4h. by 1 f. 4½) assigned (with?) to John Van Eyck. On the frame we read: DAME JACOBA DE BAVIERE, COMTESSE DE HOLLANDE OBYIT 1431. This is a copy assignable to the close of the 16th Century.

<sup>3</sup> "Ghegheven meester Luberecht over syn moyte van ij bewerpen van eenre taeffele die hy maecte ter bevelene van scepenen vj. s. gr." From the accounts of 1424 of the city of Ghent in *Le Beffroi*, fol. Ghent. 1864. Vol. II. p. 208.—See also as to the visit of the Magistrat: Ruelens. notes et additions, u. s. XLVI and M.S. notes by A. Pinchart.

<sup>4</sup> "A Jehan de Heick, jadiz pointre et varlet de chambre de feu M. S. le duc Jehan de Bayvière, lequel M. d. S., pour l'abileté et souffisance que par la relacion de plusieurs de ses gens, il auoit oy et meismes sauoit et cognoissoit estre de fait de pointure en la personne dudit Jehan de Heick, icellui Jehan, confians de sa loyauté et preudommie, a retenu en son pointre et varlet de

To what cause shall we assign the fact, unfortunately without dispute, that not a single picture by Hubert or John Van Eyck up to this time has been preserved, to what mishap shall we refer the total neglect with which, during a whole century, the creations of two great painters were treated? We already observed how unfavourably the troubles and mis-

chambre, aux honneurs, prérogatives, franchises, libertéz, droit, prouffis, et émolumens accoustumez, et qui y appartiennent. Et afin qu'il soit tenu de ouvrier pour lui de peinture toutes les fois qu'il lui plaira, lui a ordonné prendre et avoir de lui sur sa recepte générale de Flandres, la somme de C liv. parisis monnoie de Flandres, à deux termes par an, moictié au Noel et l'autre moictié à la St. Jehan dont il veult estre le premier paiement au Noel Mil CCCCXXV, et l'autre à la Saint Jean ensuivant, et ainsi d'an en an et de terme en terme, tant qu'il lui plaira, en mandant aux maitres de son hostel et autres ses officiers quelzconques, que d'icelle sa présente retenue ensamble des honneurs, prérogatives, drois, prouffis et émolumens dessusdiz facent et laissent ledit Jehan paisiblement joir, sans empeschement ou destourbier, mandant en oultre à sondit receveur général de Flandres présent et avenir, que la dicte somme de C liv. parisis par an il paye, baille, et délivre chascun an audit Jehan son pointre et varlet de chambre aux termes dessus déclairez comme de tout ce que dit est puet plus à plain apparoir par lettres patentes de mon avant dit S. sur ce faictes et données en sa ville de Bruges le XIX<sup>e</sup> jour de Mail l'an Mil CCCCXXV. Pour ce cy par vertu d'icelles dont 'vidimus' est cy à court pour le terme du Noel Mil CCCCXXV par sa quittance qui sert à la partie ensuivante cy rendue à court. A luy pour semblable et les termes de la Saint Jehan et Noel Mil CCCCXXVI par sa quittance cy rendu acourt . . . l. liv.

"Quatrième compte de Gautier Poulain depuis le 1<sup>er</sup> Janvier MCCCCXXIV jusques au dernier jour de Décembre MCCCCXXV." —*De Laborde, u. s., Les Ducs de Bourgogne, Preuves, vol. I.* pp. 206, 207.

As to the position of Varlets de Chambre the following is instructive.

VARLETS DE CHAMBRE. "M. d. S. aura des varlets de chambre tels qu'il luy plaira lesquels serviront à tour à chacune fois III, avec le premier varlet de chambre et seront contez, chacun d'eux deux chevaux à gages et un varlet à livrée."—Ordonnance faite par M. S. le Duc de Bourgogne par l'avis de son conseil sur le reglement de son hostel en MCCCCXXVI à Bruges le 14. Dec. De Laborde, u. s. *Les Ducs de Bourgogne, Introduc. Vol. I. p. 40.*

fortunes of the "pays de Liège" affected the preservation of pictures. It is not difficult to find reasons for the dispersal of art productions and the loss of art traditions in the whole of Belgium and the Netherlands. If Italy had been involved in religious persecutions, besides being torn by civil dissensions, it is probable that the works of her greatest artists would still have been preserved, because the genial nature of the climate of Italy was favourable to the existence of frescos executed in buildings of uncommon massiveness and strength. The produce of Italian craftsmen was involved in no greater dangers than those which might menace the stability of the edifices containing them; and it is a fact that the history of Italian painting can be traced on the walls of monuments from the first centuries to the age of Raphael and Michael Angelo. Unfortunately for the Netherlands the climate was the very reverse of that of Italy. The fickleness of the seasons almost daily admonished artists of the uselessness of wall distemper; whilst panel tempera tried the patience of those who waited for sun and warmth. Hence the frequency in early times of tinted sculpture and miniatures, hence the numerous portable works of a later period, the altarchests, the diptychs and triptychs, the arras, and its rival the painted cloth. After the technical improvements which the Van Eycks introduced, were carried to perfection, artists became completely independent of wind and weather; and there was no apparent limit left to production. Canvases, tapestry, and triptychs came into universal demand. There was not a noble who did not order his likeness for some altar; not a religious community which did not seek to obtain similar ornaments for its chapels and refectories; not a wealthy citizen who did not require a memento

of pictorial skill in his oratory. The eagerness of all classes was so great that magistrates, when called upon to inflict punishment for crimes, frequently ruled that offenders should pay fines sufficient to cover the price of a votive picture.<sup>1</sup> The Netherlands soon contained a greater number of "historiated" panels than any country in the world. But the very portability of these treasures became fatal to them. Civil wars broke out. Cities were destroyed by the dukes. Then came the wars of religion. Protestants and catholics were pitted against each other. Princes whose language and manners were not those of the country became its rulers. Mobs of the lower orders, cloaking the worst excesses under the name of religion, forced their way into edifices and burnt or destroyed their contents.<sup>2</sup> The kings of Spain seeing the imminence of destruction removed treasures of art to distant places; and in the course of time almost every thing of note had disappeared. Admirers of the early Flemish school may search almost in vain for works of their favorite masters in Belgium. The critic who has fathomed the causes of the disappointment goes to Italy, to France, to Germany, and to Spain, and there he patiently strives to gather

<sup>1</sup> A painter named Van den Clite (Liévin) painted a last judgment (1413) for one of the halls of the Council of Flanders. The sum paid him was 64 livres parisis, 40 livres of which were derived from a fine imposed by the council of Flanders at Ghent on one Josse de Valmerbeke, bailli of Hulst and Axel, for having unjustly sentenced to 10 years exile certain innocent persons. Other examples of the same kind are to be found. See *Mr. A. Pinchart's notice on the painter Liévin van den Clite. Bull. de l'Académie Royale des Sc. et lettres et des Beaux Arts de Belgique. Ao. 1854. Vol. XXI. 1st part. pag. 186. 7. 8—9.*

<sup>2</sup> On the 22 of Aug. 1561, a gang of iconoclasts entered St. Bavon and overturned all the statues. They removed and burnt all the pictures they laid hands on. More than 400 churches in Flanders and Brabant were plundered in the same manner in less than 8 days. *Voisin u. s. p. 73—5.*

the facts which shall enable him to reconstruct the history of art in the Netherlands, but too happy if, by some lucky discovery, he can add a link to the chain which he finds incomplete in so many parts. If he is unable to travel and hopes to find the knowledge he requires in written authorities, his disappointment is extreme. The manners and customs of Flanders and Holland were not made a subject of study by contemporary authors, in part because the Burgundian court was composed of men disdainful of the Flemings and of Flemish culture, in part because the tendency of men and times was to ponder over problems of politics, trade, and science rather than upon art and poetry. And so the centuries sped on: there was but thought of the enjoyment of the hour, and in the turmoil of commerce, intrigue, and wars, artists were overlooked and forgotten.

It would be as interesting as it is probably fruitless to inquire, how Hubert Van Eyck laid the foundation of his fame so as to find permanent employment when he settled at Ghent. After he lost the patronage of Michelle de France, he received from a Ghent patrician a commission of greater importance than any of which we have cognisance in the annals of the Belgian towns; Jodocus Vydt, the person to whom he owed this commission, was a man of old family whose wife Isabella was directly descended from the patrician stock of Burluut.<sup>1</sup> In a chapel at Saint Bavon, which was founded by Jodocus and became famous for its altarpiece of the Lamb, the arms of Vydt and Burluuts emblazoned in the coloured glass of the windows, and the walls adorned with carvings, proved the wealth and the old

<sup>1</sup> Sanderus. *Flandria Illust.* Fol. Hague. 1735. Vol. II. p. 319. *De Gandavis Erud. Claris Lib.* 1. p. 50. 8<sup>o</sup>. Antw. 1625.



descent of the family which owned it.<sup>1</sup> But the vast picture which finally adorned the altar and came to be considered a Mecca for pilgrims in the Netherlands was the real proof of its liberality and taste.

The period in which Vydt's ordered the adoration of the Lamb is uncertain; we only know that Hubert had time to plan and begin, but was prevented by a premature death from finishing, it. It is a matter of history that John Van Eyck carried out what his brother left incomplete; and there is evidence of the joint industry of both in the following inscription, the lines of which are still legible on the framings:

"Hubertus e eyck maior quo nemo repertus

Incepit pondus q̄e Johannes arte secundus

(Frater perfecit) Judoci Vyd prece fretū.

VersV SeXta MaI Vos CoLLoCat aCta tVerI."

or when translated:

"Hubert of Eyck whom no one surpassed began it. John the second brother, with art, perfected it at the prayer of Jodocus Vyd. This verse invites you to contemplate that which was done on the sixth of May 1432."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Voisin, Guide de Gand 12<sup>o</sup>. 1831. pp. 17. 187. 211. 212. De Bast. Ueber Hub. & Joh. V. Eyck. 8<sup>o</sup>. Ghent, 1825. Translated from Dr. Waagen. Note.

Vydt's bore, Or, the fesses chequered azure. Burluut bore, Azure, Three Stags in course Or.

<sup>2</sup> This inscription has been recovered from beneath coats of paint. The first line to "repertus" is under the portrait of Jodocus, the second to "secundus" under John the Baptist, the third under the portrait of Isabella Burluut, the fourth under the figure of John the Evangelist. The letters in capitals only differ from the rest by being painted red, whilst the others are black. Two words which fail in the third line have been completed from an old copy of the inscription found by Mr. de Bast (Hubert and Joh. V. Eyck translated, u. s. p. 27), with "frater perfectus," to which it is probable that we should prefer "frater perfecit." The inscription would then read as in the text. See the discussion on this inscription in Carton apud

That John Van Eyck should have taken six years to finish a picture left on the stocks by his brother in 1426, might lead to the belief that Hubert had done very little to bring it forward, were it not that there are proofs of John's constant employment in the duties of his place at the court of Philip the Good. There are a few persons still who think that they would unduly lower John Van Eyck's fame if they assigned to Hubert the place of chief of the school; and we should be careful to weigh this opinion, resting, as it does, on a certain amount of respectable evidence;<sup>1</sup> but it is difficult to understand how to attenuate the importance of the first line of the inscription on the Agnus Dei, which speaks of Hubert as "*Maior quo nemo repertus*," corroborated as it is by Vasari, who attributes to him the invention of oil painting,<sup>2</sup> confirmed as it is by an epitaph which describes him as "a painter most high in honour."<sup>3</sup> We are inclined to ask whether an artist who is represented by Guicciardini and Van Mander as having laboured at the same compositions with his brother, could occupy the second place when his age and his

Ruelens: Notes et additions, pp. XLIII. XLIV. Van Mander's statement that the altarpiece of the Lamb was painted for Philip the Good is contradicted by the inscription (Van Mander, u. s. 201.)—That Vydt's was Van Eyck's patron was known to Sanderus, who quotes the following punning lines of one Vrients:

Quis Deus, ob *vitium*, paradiso exegit, Apelles

Eyckius hos *vitii* reddidit aere patres.

Arte, modoque pari-pariter concurrere visi.

Æmulus huic pictor, fictor et inde Deus.

Sanderus adds: "*Picturæ etiam variæ . . . . Triumphus agnus Cælestis est qui Joh. et Hubertus picturæ coryphæi, Justo Vitio domino de Pamele patricio Gandavense pretium solvente. Flandria Illustrata. De Brug. Erud. Clar. lib. 1. p. 39.*"

<sup>1</sup> See amongst others Ruelens notes et additions, u. s.

<sup>2</sup> Vasari XIII. p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> See postea.

experience entitled him to the first?<sup>1</sup> Would a second rate artist, even though his brother were of the household of John of Bavaria, have been visited in state by the chiefs of a great municipality like that of Ghent? Would he have had commissions from a patron such as Vydt and for a picture so vast and so important as the Lamb? When Hubert was dead and his altarpiece was finished, then indeed, but not before, it was John's turn to receive tokens of respect. It was no doubt to see the Agnus Dei in its complete state that Philip the Good honoured the workshop of his painter with a visit in February 1432; it was probably for the same purpose that the burgomasters and a select company of the magistrates of Bruges went to the workshop of Van Eyck. On both occasions the varlets and apprentices received "largesse."<sup>2</sup>

The Chapel of the Vydt at Saint Bavon was consecrated in 1432, and Van Mander describes the "swarms" which came to admire it.<sup>3</sup> There were festive

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s. 200. 201. Guicciardini. Hist. de tous les Pays Bas, u. s. p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> "Aux varlets de Johannes Deyk peintre aussi pour don par M. S. à eulx fait quant M. d. S. a esté en son hostel veoir certain ouuraige fait par ledit Johannes XXV solz.—Compte de Jehan Abonnel, Jan. 1432, à Dec. 1433."—*De Laborde, Les Ducs de B.*, u. s. vol. I. p. 266.

Mr. Pinchart proves (Annot., u. s. CCVII) that the visit took place before the 19th of February, because the audit of the account containing the item is dated on that day.

The visit of the Burgomasters to Van Eyck is proved by Mr. Weale. (Notes Sur Jean Van Eyck. 8<sup>o</sup>. London and Bruxelles, 1861. Note to pp. 8. 9.) Mr. Weale is inclined to think it followed, Mr. Pinchart (annot., u. s. CCVII) believes it preceded the despatch of the Agnus Dei to Ghent; and it is probable that Mr. Pinchart is right.

<sup>3</sup> De Bast, (u. s. Note to Waagen's Ueber H. and J. V. E. p. 35.)

Van Mander, (u. s. 201—2). It is characteristic of the rapidity, with which Hubert was forgotten that an ode, written by Lucas de Heere in the 16th century, was copied on a tablet

days, he adds, on which the people were allowed to enter. In ordinary times it was closed, and "few but the high born and such as could afford to pay the *custos* saw it."<sup>1</sup>

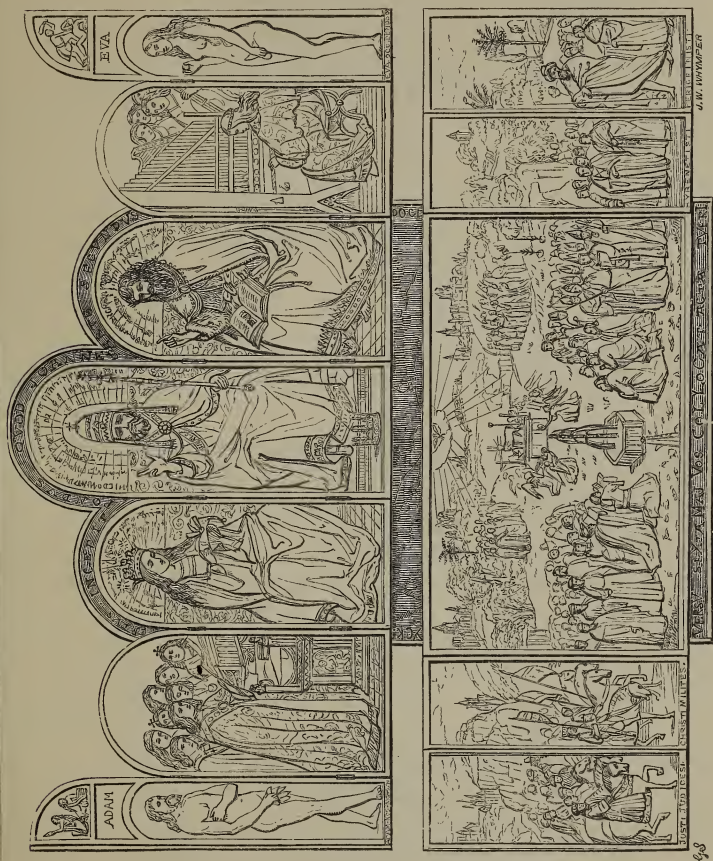
That this wonderful performance, when finished and exhibited, should have been looked at with exceptional interest is not surprising. It was the finest picture of the age in Belgium, remarkable for its perfection of technical handling, and eminently calculated to captivate a public full of the fervour of religion. When open it represented the sacrifice of Christ, and the triumph of the Church militant. When closed it displayed in prominent positions the portraits of the donors. That such a picture should receive minute and special attention is evident.

In the centre of the altarpiece, and on a panel which overtops all the others, the noble and dignified figure of Christ sits enthroned in the prime of manhood with a short black beard, a broad forehead, and black eyes. On his head is the white tiara, ornamented with a profusion of diamonds, pearls, and amethysts. Two dark lappets fall on either side of the grave and youthful face. The throne of black damask is embroidered with gold; the tiara relieved on a golden ground covered with inscriptions in semicircular lines. Christ holds in his left hand a sceptre of splendid workmanship, and with two fingers of his right he gives his blessing to the world. The gorgeous red mantle which completely enshrouds his form is fastened at the breast by a large placed above the altarpiece of the Agnus Dei, and that this ode began as follows:

"In praise of the work, which is done in St. John's Chapel by Meester Jan, born at Mæseyck, the Flemish Apelles," and yet in the ode itself we read: "Hy (Hubert) hadde t'Werck begonst." But see also Vaernewyk. Hist. v. Belgis, u. s. 109.

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s. 202.





# THE MYSTIC LAMB.

Interior of the Altar-piece of Ghent, by Hubert and John Van Eyck.











THE VIRGIN.

From the Altar-piece at Ghent, by Hubert Van Eyck.

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jewelled brooch. The mantle itself is bordered with a double row of pearls and amethysts. The feet rest on a golden pedestal, carpeted with black, and on the dark ground, which is cut into perspective squares by lines of gold, lies a richly-jewelled open-worked crown, emblematic of martyrdom. This figure of the Redeemer is grandly imposing; the mantle, though laden with precious stones, in obedience to a somewhat literal interpretation of Scripture, falls from the shoulders and over the knees to the feet in ample and simple folds. The colour of the flesh is powerful, brown, glowing, and full of vigour, that of the vestments strong and rich. The hands are well drawn, perhaps a little contracted in the muscles, but still of startling realism. On the right of Christ the Virgin sits in her traditional robe of blue; her long fair hair, bound to the forehead by a diadem, flowing in waves down her shoulders. With most graceful hands she holds a book, and pensively looks with a placid and untroubled eye into space. On the left of the Eternal St. John the Baptist rests, long haired and bearded, austere in expression, splendid in form, and covered with a broad, flowing, green drapery. On the spectator's right of St. John the Baptist, St. Cecilia, in a black brocade, plays on an oaken organ supported by three or four angels with viols and harps. On the left of the Virgin a similar but less beautiful group of singing choristers stand in front of an oaken desk, the foremost of them dressed in rich and heavy red brocade.<sup>1</sup> All the singing and playing angels have light wavy hair, bound over the head by cinctures of precious stones. Their dresses

<sup>1</sup> The angels who sing are so artfully done that we mark the difference of keys, in which their voices are pitched (Van Mander, u. s. 201).

are profusely ornamented, somewhat heavy in texture and angular in fold. A prevailing red tone in the shadow of the flesh tints makes it doubtful whether they are executed by the same hand as the Christ, but the comparative want of power and harmony in the colour of these panels may be caused by restoring, and a few outlines which are slightly weakened may owe this blemish to a similar cause.<sup>1</sup>

On the spectator's right of St. Cecilia once stood the naked figure of Eve, now removed to the Brussels museum—a figure upon which the painter seems to have concentrated all his knowledge of perspective as applied to the human form and its anatomical development. It would be too much to say that Hubert rises to the conception of an ideal of beauty. The head is over large, the body protrudes, and the legs are spare, but the mechanism of the limbs and the shape of the extremities are rendered with truth and delicacy, and there is much power in the colouring of the flesh.<sup>2</sup>

Counterpart to Eve, and once on the left side of the picture, Adam is equally remarkable for correctness of proportion and natural realism.<sup>3</sup> Here again the master's science in optical perspective is conspicuous, and the height of the figure above the eye is fitly considered.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not only are the choristers out of harmony with the parts painted by Hubert, but with those portions also which are the work of John, such as the central composition and the panels of the knights and pilgrims on the lower portion of the wings. By restoration is here meant the process of cleaning and consequent weakening of the surface and parts of the outline.

<sup>2</sup> Above this figure is a miniature group of the death of Abel.

<sup>3</sup> "Siet hoe verschrickelyck en levend Adam staat." De Heere's Ode in Van Mander, u. s. 203.

<sup>4</sup> Above this figure is a miniature group of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel.

Christ, by his position, presides over the sacrifice of the Lamb as represented in the lower panels of the shrine. The scene of the sacrifice is laid in a landscape formed of green hills receding in varied and pleasing lines from the foreground to the extreme distance. A Flemish city, meant, no doubt, to represent Jerusalem, is visible chiefly in the background to the right; but churches and monasteries, built in the style of the early edifices of the Netherlands and Rhine country, boldly raise their domes and towers above every part of the horizon, and are sharply defined on a sky of pale grey gradually merging into a deeper hue. The trees, which occupy the middle ground, are not of high growth, nor are they very different in colour from the undulating meadows in which they stand. They are interspersed here and there with cypresses, and on the left is a small date palm. The centre of the picture is all meadow and green slope, from a foreground strewn with daisies and dandelions to the distant blue hills.

In the very centre of the picture a square altar is hung with red damask and covered with a white cloth. Here stands a lamb, from whose breast a stream of blood issues into a crystal glass. Angels kneel round the altar with parti-coloured wings and variegated dresses, many of them praying with joined hands, others holding aloft the emblems of the passion, two in front waving censers. From a slight depression of the ground to the right a little behind the altar a numerous band of female saints is issuing, all in rich and varied costumes, fair hair floating over their shoulders, and palms in their hands; foremost may be noticed St. Barbara with the tower and St. Agnes. From a similar opening on the left, popes, cardinals, bishops, monks, and minor clergy advance, some holding croziers and

crosses, others palms. This, as it were, forms one phase of the adoration. In the centre near the base of the picture a small octagonal fountain of stone, with an iron jet and tiny spouts, projects a stream into a rill, whose pebbly bottom is seen through the pellucid water. The fountain and the altar, with vanishing points on different horizons, prove the Van Eycks to have been unacquainted with the science of linear perspective. Two distinct groups are in adoration on each side of the fountain. That on the right comprises the twelve apostles, in light greyish violet cloaks kneeling bare-footed on the sward, with long hair and beards, expressing in their noble faces the intensity of their faith. On their right stands a gorgeous array of three popes, two cardinal monks, seven bishops, and a miscellaneous crowd of church- and laymen. The group on the left of the fountain is composed of kings and princes in varied costumes, the foremost of them kneeling, the rest standing, none finer than that of a dark bearded man in a red cloth cap stepping forward in full front towards the spectator, dressed in a dark blue mantle, and holding a sprig of myrtle. The whole of the standing figures command prolonged attention, from the variety of the attitudes and expressions, the stern resolution of some, the eager glances of others, the pious resignation and contemplative serenity of the remainder. The faithful who have thus reached the scene of the sacrifice, are surrounded by a perfect wilderness of flowering shrubs, lilies, and other beautiful plants, and remain in quiet contemplation of the Lamb. Numerous worshippers besides are represented on the wings of the triptych, moving towards the place of worship. On the left is a band of crusaders, the foremost of whom, on a dapple grey charger, is clad in armour

with an undercoat of green slashed stuff, a crown of laurel on his brow, and a lance in his hand. On his left two knights are riding, also in complete armour, one on a white, the other on a brown charger, carrying lances with streamers. Next to the third figure, a nobleman in a fur cap bestrides an ass, whose ears appear above the press; on his left a crowned monarch on a black horse; behind them a crowd of kings and princes. In rear of them, and in the last panel to the left, Hubert Van Eyck with long brown hair, in a dark cap, the fur peak of which is turned up, ambles forward on a spirited white pony. He is dressed in blue velvet lined with grey fur; his saddle has long green housings. In the same line with him two riders are mounted on sorel nags, and next them again a man in a black turban and dark brown dress trimmed with fur, whom historians agree in calling John Van Eyck. The face is turned towards Hubert, and, therefore, away from the direction taken by the cavalcade; further in rear are several horsemen. The two groups proceed along a sandy path, which yields under the horses' hoofs, and seems to have been formed by the *detritus* of a block of stony ground rising perpendicularly behind, on each side of which the view extends to a rich landscape, with towns and churches in the distance on one hand, and a beautiful vista of blue and snow mountains on the other. White fleecy clouds float in the sky. There is not to be found in the whole Flemish school a single panel in which human figures are grouped, designed, or painted with so much perfection as in this of the mystic Lamb. Nor is it possible to find a more complete or better distributed composition, more natural attitudes, or more dignified expression. Nowhere in the pictures of the early part of the 15th century can such airy landscape



be met. Nor is the talent of the master confined to the appropriate representation of the human form, his skill extends alike to the brute creation. The horses, whose caparisons are of the most precious kind, are admirably drawn and in excellent movement. One charger stretches his neck to lessen the pressure of the bit; another champs the curb with Flemish phlegma; a third throws his head down between his fore legs; the pony ridden by Hubert Van Eyck betrays a natural fire, and frets under the restraint put upon it.

On the right side of the altarpiece we see a noble band of ascetics with tangled hair and beards and deep complexions, dressed in frock and cowl, with staves and rosaries, moving round the base of a rocky bank, the summit of which is wooded and interspersed with palms and orange trees. Two female saints, one of them the Magdalen, bring up the rear of the hermit band, which moves out of a grove of orange trees with glossy leaves and yellow fruit. In the next panel to the right, and in a similar landscape, St. Christopher, pole in hand, in a long red cloak of inelegant folds, overtops the host of his companions—pilgrims with grim and solemn faces. Here a palm and a cypress are painted with surprising fidelity.

The altarpiece, when closed, has not the all absorbing interest of its principal scenes when open. It is subdivided first into two parts, in the upper portion of which is the Annunciation, in the lower the portraits of Jodocus Vydt's and his wife, and imitated statues of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist. In the semicircular projection of the upper central panel are the Sibyls, whilst half figures of Zachariah and Micah are placed in the semicircles above the annunciate angel and Virgin. With the exception

of Jodocus and his wife and the Annunciation, the whole of this outer part of the panels may have been executed under supervision by the pupils of the Van Eycks. St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, who fill the two lower central compartments, are not very attractive representations of these saints. They are exact copies of stone images, with the heavy drapery and angular breaks or ill chosen features and inarticulate limbs common to the sculpture of the period. Besides lacking the charm of colour, which is the peculiar attraction of the master, they are without any prominent qualities of design. On the left, in a stone niche, and kneeling on a pavement of square grey stones, is the living form of Jodocus Vydts, bareheaded and dressed in a red cloth cloak lined with brown fur. This lining is turned over at the neck and sleeves; the latter being of a peculiar shape fitting loosely at the wrist, and pendent in bags. The stuff of which this cloak is made is thick and substantial, and it is loosely fastened round the body below the hips by a buckled belt supporting a black purse. Jodocus is not an habitual ascetic; on the contrary, he loves good cheer, which his heavy jaw and portly frame hardly belie. Small grey eyes swim in a troubled medium; the nose is of a fair size, neither aquiline nor straight; the mouth is certainly large, with a broad and sensual under lip; the cheeks wide and overhanging, and their fat sides joined to the well furnished chin concealing a wrinkled and pursy neck. There is a wart on the upper lip, another on the nose, and a third on the forehead; the head is closely cropped, and a small ear is left exposed; the hair has fallen from the brows, but the beard is of two days' growth. Vydts' attitude and expression are eminently pious; there can be no doubt

that he is praying with his whole soul, his eyes and brows being devoutly raised to heaven. We do not require to see those hands joined in prayer, finger to finger, and so admirably delineated even to the loose and wrinkled flesh, to know that Jodocus is in fervent adoration. He is so intent on begging pardon for his sins that we cannot but conclude that he has not a few to answer for. He has had a good time both to sin and repent, for he cannot be less than sixty years of age; his forehead is furrowed with lines by the elevation of his eyebrows, and his hair is slightly interspersed with grey.

Isabel Burluut kneels on the right hand in a niche. She is not more than usually comely, but dignified and matronly; she does not look up to heaven with the supplicatory glance of her husband, but rather turns towards the nearest St. John, the mild and hopeful Evangelist. The consciousness of truth is in her face; the eye is limpid, calm, cold, and grey, the mouth expressive of decision and moral rectitude, the head well proportioned, resting on a somewhat slender neck, overhung by a rather prominent cheek; the nose is large, the eyebrows spare. It is hard to tell the colour of the hair, for that is carefully brushed into a black fillet, of which the dark line may be seen through the transparent muslin lying flat over the forehead, and forming two folds at each side of her face, from thence hanging in two light lappets on the cheek about the level of the ear. Over this muslin is pinned a white linen cap, which covers the whole head, and hangs in folds over the shoulders. A white collar relieves the neck, and the frame is encased in a vague peach-coloured dress, lined and faced with bright green stuff, turned outwards at the bosom and

wrists; the hands are small, but not remarkable for elegance.

There is nothing in these two portraits to show that Jodocus and his wife are more than substantial burghesses. They have no ornaments of any kind; their faces and hands are weather-beaten enough to prove that their time has not been specially given to indolence. We should not say that they fed daintily or lived in retirement, nor do they show any symptoms of "blood."

Were it not for a certain angularity in the draperies, some abruptness of light and shade, and a general tone of redness which pervades the shadows of the flesh tint in these two wonderful likenesses, they would be perfect. They are as vivid portraits as are to be found in the early school of the Netherlands. They are finely modelled, and finished with a minuteness that allows of the closest inspection.

That portion of the pictures which represents the annunciation creates a different impression. The angel and the Virgin are in a long room, through the centre windows of which the eye wanders to a distance of sky and houses.<sup>1</sup> The floor is of square stone flags, the ceiling of beams. A ray of light falls through the opening on the wall. The angel kneels on the left at a considerable distance from the Virgin. Sunk on his right knee, and completely clad in white, his only ornament is a gold border to the mantle and a circular

<sup>1</sup> The view appears to have been taken from nature, and its site and features are said in part to exist at Ghent. On the right is the steeple of the Weaver's church, and behind it a gate, since destroyed, bearing the name of "Walpoorte." On the left is the "St. Martin's Straet," and the "Steen van Papeghem." This view, it is supposed, Van Eyck copied from the window of the house, No. 26, Koey Straat, where, accordingly, medallion portraits of the painters have been placed.

brooch of gold. The mantle hangs in mazes on the painted squares of the floor, lies in masses on the raised left knee, and is held up in confused and angular folds by the left hand, which grasps at once the drapery and a branch of lilies. Great intentness marks the expression of the eyes, but it was, perhaps, unnecessary to show the teeth through the open lips. A most curious contrast is produced by the light yellow hair, the thin streak of pale eyebrows, and the black pupils of the eyes, a contrast rendered yet more strange by the whiteness of the flesh tints in light and their strong hue in shadow.

The Virgin, on the opposite side of the room, holds her long fingered hands crossed over her bosom. She also has a cincture of pearls keeping back a profusion of pale waving hair. Her mantle of white, adorned with a double border of gold lace of unequal width, leaves her neck bare, and is fastened by a brooch of pearls. The folds of the mantle are tucked up in stiff and formal plaits under her right arm, whilst they hang over her left, and a profusion of angular drapery covers the floor. The Virgin looks up, and casts her eyes to heaven with a mixed expression of wonder and fear, her mouth is partly open, she has a very high round forehead, and the slightest possible eyebrows; her neck is small and wrinkled, and she wants shoulders. The flesh lights are white, the shadows more cold, and, perhaps, a little more red than those in the face of the announcing angel. On the left of the figure a book lies open on a desk beneath an arched window. In a niche close by are an iron candlestick and pot, on an upper shelf an earthenware vase and two books; in the nearest window-sill a glass decanter. The white dove flies above the Virgin's head—symbol of the Holy



Ghost. The composition is of a cold and formal conception and execution when contrasted with the rest of the pictures of the Lamb, but there is marvellous atmospheric perspective in the apartment, which, from its singular construction, seems unfitted to contain the figures. In the half circle above the announcing angel is, as we saw, the prophet Zachariah, his face brown and highly coloured, his eyelids spacious as in the pictures of Cristus and Van der Weyden. In the similar space above the Virgin is the more characteristic half length of the prophet Micah.<sup>1</sup>

Looking at this beautiful altarpiece in its totality, we have to consider that it is the work of two artists and their assistants, of Hubert, who, no, doubt, composed, arranged, and partly executed it, of John and his journeymen who finished it. The portraits of the two brothers are found on one of the panels; are they done by the elder or by the younger brother? What part is Hubert most likely to have finished first? Surely the upper, which comprises the Saviour, the Virgin, St. John, and our first parents; yet when looking at the band of hermits in the lower course, the display of power seems as great as in the best portions of the upper, and greater than is to be found in any of the pictures produced by John Van Eyck alone. Hubert *incepit*, John *perfectit*; that is the sum total of our knowledge. By nicely comparing the merits of the several pieces, we come to the conclusion that John carried out the panel of the Lamb with some of the groups at its sides, and most of the outer faces; but it would be too much to say that Hubert was not

<sup>1</sup> The whole altarpiece rested on a panel representing the abode of Satan. This panel was a tempera and perished at some remote date. Van Mander, u. s. 201.

instrumental in laying out and beginning some even of these.

The unity of religious thought which comes to its display in this masterpiece is marred by curious disproportions. The idea of divine power conveyed by contrasting the larger size of Christ, Mary, and John with the smaller stature of the angels or Adam and Eve, is more of earth than of heaven, and hardly conducive to a fine general effect. Our feeling for uniformity is affected by figures reduced in the lower course to one-third of the height of those in the upper. There is something essentially of this world in the realism which depicts the Saviour in a room with a chequered floor, and the angels of paradise as choristers in an organ loft. It is a mistake into which the Van Eycks have fallen to suppose that the notion of spiritual might is inseparable from rigidity of attitude and gaze, or that the radiance of God can be fitly and exclusively embodied in gorgeous raiment and costly jewels; but, taking realism as the necessary portion of the Fleming, it is a pleasure to admire the regular forms, the grave and solemn face of Christ, the mild serenity of Mary, and the rugged force of the Baptist.

There is great if not perfect harmony of lines and of parts in the composition of the adoration of the Lamb, and no picture in the Flemish school of the 15th century more completely and fully combines the laws of appropriate distribution. The human framework is mostly well proportioned, appropriate in movement and immediate in action. Without selection, if tried by the purest standards, the nude as displayed in Adam and Eve would satisfy the canons of a not too critical taste. It is studied as to shape and place, natural, and carefully wrought in features, articulations, and extremities.

Outlines of such clearness and firmness were only possible to men fully cognizant of anatomy; they are never too strongly emphasized, except where the artists try their utmost to be true to the model. Expression, chastened and serene in some of the more ideal figures, is seldom free from vulgarity in those of a lower clay; and if plainness of face does not repel us in a St. Christopher, it is strikingly out of place in the Virgin or in angels. Drapery is often unequal,—at times ample and telling of the under shapes, as in the Eternal and the hermits; at times broken, as in the brocades of the choristers; or angular, piled, and superabundant, as in the Annunciation.

As landscapists, the Van Eycks are not only faultless, they are above all praise. The landscapes give that unity to the composition which it ought to have derived solely from the proper arrangement of the groups. Grand and harmonious lines unite the various parts together, and the beauty of the distances contrasts with the figures to the disadvantage of the latter. The feeling for depth which pervades the altarpiece is one of its chief attractions. To a certain extent the Van Eycks possessed the rules of linear perspective, but the want of its abstract scientific principles is but too evident in the *Agnus Dei*. They corrected this want of science by the most judicious and admirable use of ærial perspective. They deceived the eye by subtly melting tints, so as to interpose air between the spectator and the receding distances; they thus rivalled nature in her most beautiful gifts, and achieved what we prize in the very best of the later Dutch. They shed light round their figures so as to relieve them upon each other or upon the landscape; they projected their shadows with consummate art, showing

themselves in this respect possessed of a quality unknown to the followers of their school, rare in the 15th century, and attained in the 16th only by artists of the highest powers. The panel of St. Christopher may be taken as an example of their skill in melting tones to the extreme horizon. That of the hermits—a well ordered composition—represents figures under leafy overhanging trees, yet preserving their due position in the landscape. The interior of the Annunciation—too small for the figures—is kept in focus by the subtle arrangement of tints and the dexterous play of sun through a window, whilst the sense of subdued light in a room is rendered in the whitish tones of the flesh.

The true excellence of the Van Eycks is their excellence as colourists. Their picture is in respect of tone perfectly beautiful. Some panels are doubtless finer than others, but the variation in colour is less marked than the variations in drawing. The general intonation is powerful, of a brown reddish tinge, full of light yet in a low key,—technically considered, of a full body copiously used, with a rich vehicle and great blending. The labour of the brush is not visible, but the skin and complexions have the polish of bronze. The brightest lights and the shadows of flesh are high in surface. The whole is treated with great breadth of chiaroscuro, yet at times with minute detail. In some parts indeed the detail is carried out to the detriment of the mass. The draperies are more thickly laid in than the flesh, and the shadows of the folds project from the panel; the touch is every where decisive and the accessories are modelled in relief.<sup>1</sup> Important as a test of

<sup>1</sup> Altarpiece of Saint Bavon. This altarpiece in twelve parts has been dismembered, and is in part only in its original place, the wings being, with the exception of the Adam and Eve in

the perfection, to which the new system of painting had been brought in the Netherlands is the fact that no portion of the altar-piece gives evidence of experimental or tentative handling. The parts are all treated

the gallery of Berlin.—In Saint Bavon. Adoration of the Lamb. 4 f. 4 h. by 7 f. 1. Christ enthroned. 6 f.  $7\frac{3}{4}$  h. by 2 f.  $6\frac{1}{4}$ . The Virgin and St. John the Baptist 5 f.  $7\frac{1}{2}$  by 2 f.  $2\frac{1}{2}$ .

Brussels Museum. No. 13. Adam and Eve. Wood. 6 f.  $7\frac{3}{4}$  by 1 f.  $3\frac{1}{8}$ .

Berlin Museum. The singing and playing angels. Nos. 514 and 515. Arched. 5 f.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  h. by 2 f.  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; the hermits and pilgrims; the judges and champions of Christ. Nos. 512 and 513. 4 f.  $7\frac{3}{4}$  h. by 1 f.  $7\frac{1}{2}$ . No. 518, St. John as a statue is the obverse of 512. No. 519, Jodocus is the obverse of 513. No. 520, the annuntiate angel, No. 521, the annuntiate Virgin, are obverse of the playing and singing angels. No. 522, Isabella Vyds, is obverse of No. 516.

The earliest mention that we find of this masterpiece is in Dürer's Diary (Reliquien ed. Campe. p. 123), where special admiration is expressed for the "Adam and Eve and God the Father." (1521). The first great portion of the *chef-d'œuvre* that disappeared was the panel representing the tortures of the condemned, which, being painted in tempera, was washed out before Van Mander's time. Jan Schoreel and Lancelot Blondel attempted to restore the altar-piece in 1550, and "washed it so that they brought out afresh a portion which dirt had partially concealed." As they were painters of some note, perhaps their restoration did but little harm. It pleased the canons of St. Bavon, who gave Jan Schoreel a silver cup. (Van Vaernewyk Hist. v. Belg, u. s. 219).

Philip II. of Spain, who, during the civil wars, succeeded in depriving Belgium of many pictures, contented himself with an able copy by Michel Coxie, for which he paid 4,000 ducats; a larger sum, perhaps, than the original produced. (Vaernewyk, p. 219. V. Mander, p. 201. Guicciardini, u. s.)

The Calvinists of Ghent were with difficulty prevented (circa 1578) from making a present of the altar-piece to Elizabeth of England, in return for the support she gave to the Ghentish citizens of her persuasion. (Ruelens notes et additions, u. s. LXXIV). They had it taken to the Town Hall where it remained till the 17th of Sept. 1584, when it was restored to St. Bavon under the superintendence of Francois Hoorebant (Ib. ib. LXXVI). In 1663 the picture was cleaned by Antoine van den Heuvel (Ib. ib. ib.). After narrowly escaping from destruction by so many causes, the Agnus Dei owes its chief dismemberment to Joseph the II<sup>d</sup> of Austria, who is said to have expressed disgust at the naked figures of Adam and Eve. The altar-piece, in consequence of this, remained closed and shrouded from view



in the same way; the pigments are mixed with oil vehicle and used with a freedom which bespeaks consummate practice. It is a strange vagary of history that of two painters who lived for a quarter if not for half a century, the works should remain wholly unknown to us till a period when their style had reached its final expansion. Here are two artists who mastered the most interesting problem of any age, who invented a medium subverting the old ones in use throughout the

from 1785 to 1794, when it was carried off in part by the picture-fanciers of the French revolution, and restored a few years later at the peace. Squeamish notions still prevailing, the wings were taken to a cellar, and not restored to their original position. They were sold at last, by a priest, for little or nothing, to Mr. Nieuwenhuys, against whom an action was brought for their recovery. This, however, failed; the wings were sold to Mr. Solly, a London amateur, for 4,000*l.*, and by him to the King of Prussia (Michiels. Vol. II. p. 102). The panels of Adam and Eve, after remaining for many years in the cellars of St. Bavon, were given up (1861) to the Belgian government in return for the Coxie copies of the wings which were bought from Mr. Nieuwenhuys. The original designs for the Adam and Eve of the Agnus Dei are in the collection of the drawings of the Louvre. They are of a small size and on paper. The figure of Adam is a small facsimile of the picture. That of Eve is somewhat different, the head more in profile, and the form a faithful copy of a bad model. On the back of the drawings is a representation of a man seated at a desk or bench, writing. On the same sheet are also several heads of women in caps and other figures designed from nature. The discovery of these drawings is due to M. de Reiset, the conservator of the drawings of the Louvre.

Coxie's copies of the Christ and adoration of the Lamb are Nos. 524, 525 in the Berlin Museum. His copies of the Virgin and Baptist are Nos. 55 and 61 in the Pinakothek of Munich.—A copy of the inner scenes of the Agnus Dei, once the property of F. L. Lemmé Esq. at Hadley near Barnet, was presented by him in 1865 to the Gallery of Antwerp, and is numbered there 413—24. It was exhibited at Manchester, had once been in the chapel of the Town Hall at Ghent, was sold by the French in 1796 to M. C. Hissette, and afterwards formed part of Mr. Ader's collection. This copy bears not the remotest trace of the beautiful colour of the original. In execution weak, in tone cold and grey, it is of much less value than Coxie's copy in the Berlin and Munich galleries. The painter seems to have been an artist who lived towards the close of the 17th century.

world, and yet of whose invention we only know the aim and the results. Of the pictures in which they first emancipated themselves from the traditions of the guilds not a trace; all the preliminary steps by which they perfected their discovery are obliterated. To which of the two masters shall we ascribe the trials first made to replace the old method by a new one; in what respect did the latter differ from the former? To answer these questions with authority is unfortunately beyond the power of any writer not furnished with better materials than those at present in existence; but we shall observe in the first place that John Van Eyck, who lived much later and holds a more brilliant position in our eyes than Hubert, was also favoured by fortune in this, that though the grave had scarcely closed upon him before he was forgotten by his countrymen, he was remembered by men in distant lands who were not content to know that he had existed, but who committed the fact to paper and so handed it down to posterity. Cyriacus of Ancona, (obit 1457) incidentally wrote that John was an eminent artist.<sup>1</sup> Bartholomew Facius (1454) described him as chief among the painters of his time.<sup>2</sup> Filarete (1460—64) asserted that he was master of oil painting,<sup>3</sup> and Giovanni Santi, in his "Life and deeds of Frederick of

<sup>1</sup> Cyriacus in Colucci. *Antichità Picene*. Tom XV. p. 143. "Rugerus in Bursella, post præclarum illum brugiensem, picturæ decus, Joannem, insignis N. T. pictor habetur."

<sup>2</sup> Facio (*De Viris Illus.* u. s. p. 46), calls John Van Eyck "prince of all the painters of his age; and not merely great in art but also learned in geometry and all the arts which appertain to painting, because he had discovered many things in the properties of colour, of which he had found the source in Pliny".

<sup>3</sup> Filarete (Vasari, u. s. comm. alla vita d'Antonello da Messina IV, p. 99), in a treatise of 1460—64, said: "Painting in oil is a different method, and very good for those who know how to do it; it was customary in La Magna, chiefly with Giovanni da Bruggia and Mæstro Ruggieri."

Montefeltro," confounded in a common eulogy the chiefs of the two Flemish schools, "Joannes and Ruggieri."<sup>1</sup> That Hubert was not mentioned by Cyriacus, Facius, and Filarete, was a natural consequence of his having died so much earlier, and at a period when Italians were exclusively attracted to the study of Greek and Latin classics. But when after a time he too came to be rescued from oblivion, it was an Italian who had the good fortune to do so. When Vasari wrote and first published his lives he went on the authority of those who thought that John Van Eyck was the sole inventor of oil painting; he said so in his introduction; he repeated it in the life of Antonello; but before he republished the lives in 1568, his countryman Guicciardini had been on a visit to the Low Countries and discovered that such a person as Hubert had existed. It was in 1567 that Guicciardini's description of the Netherlands appeared. With pardonable national pride he quoted Vasari for his knowledge of John Van Eyck, but he added from hearsay some facts unknown to Vasari as to the Agnus Dei and pictures at Ypres and Bruges, and concluded with a faint reference to the new fact that "John had been followed and imitated by his brother Hubert who lived with him and worked on the same pieces."<sup>2</sup>

The elder Van Eyck now became a reality, shorn indeed of his due, but admitted into the comity of artists. Vasari, informed by Guicciardini's work, to which his attention was called by Lampsonius, had just time to introduce Hubert's name into the last volume of his new edition, and he did so with the curious

<sup>1</sup> Santi in Passavant's life of Raphael. 8<sup>o</sup>. Leipzig 1839. I. p. 471.

<sup>2</sup> Guicciardini, u. s. p. 123—4.

vagueness of a man who feels committed to a previous error and would fain correct it without quite putting himself in the wrong.<sup>1</sup> The Fleming Opmeer followed suit about 1569, adding what Guicciardini had omitted, that John and Hubert together thought out how to mix pigments with linseed oil;<sup>2</sup> and Lampsonius writing the verses appended to the portraits of the Van Eycks published by Jerom Cock admitted that John was the disciple of Hubert, and that both had made the discovery of oil medium.<sup>3</sup> That Van Mander at last took up an undecided position as to the relation of Hubert to John is no doubt due to the fact that the inscriptions on the altar-piece of the Lamb had been painted over and forgotten and he was misled by the ambiguities of Vasari. The consequences of his timidity are felt to the present day.

Equally important and quite as difficult to trace is the question in what respect the new method of oil painting differed from the old. There are two classes of inquirers following separate currents of thought who have come to conclusions on this point. At their head we find respectively the late Sir Charles Eastlake and Count Secco Suardi. Both accept it as proved that

<sup>1</sup> Vasari, u. s. XIII. p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Opmeer, opus u. s. p. 405.

<sup>3</sup> "Quasmodo communes cum fratre, Huberto, merenti  
Attribuit laudes nostra Thalia tibi,  
Si non sufficient: addatur et illa tua quod  
Discipulus frater te superavit ope."

This is what Lampsonius writes of Hubert. Of John he writes:

"Ille ego, qui lætos oleo de semine lini  
Expresso docui princeps miscere colores,  
Huberto cum fratre. Novum stupuere repertum,  
Atque ipsi ignotum quondam fortassis Apelli,  
Florentes opibus Brugæ. Mox nostra per omnem  
Diffundi late probitas non abnuuit orbem."

(Pictorum aliquot celeb. 8<sup>o</sup>. Antv. CIO.IQ.C. pp. 97. 98.)

oils used before the time of the Van Eycks for moistening pigments were boiled oils of a marked colour and strong viscosity. Both take the narrative of Vasari to prove that the viscous oils were those for which a substitute was found. Count Secco Suardi solves the matter by a clear process of reasoning, which has every thing in its favour except this that the pictures of the Van Eycks were not painted as they must have been if his theory were correct.<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Eastlake uses the evidence with the practised skill of a man who was at once an artist and a philosopher.<sup>2</sup>

Vasari dwells at some length on the mishap which, according to his information, befel John Van Eyck when he painted and varnished a panel in tempera, and put it in the sun to dry. He tells how the panel was split, and how disgusted the master became of tempera and varnish. He then shows how Van Eyck, in his attempt to find a varnish that did not require sun heat, discovered the drying qualities of linseed and nut oil, and out of these and other substances made the varnish which he required. He concludes by saying that these oils (?mere linseed and nut oils) were experimentally mixed with pigments producing colours equally remarkable for their tempered strength, their powers of drying, their resistance to water, and their lucidity independent of a final varnish.<sup>3</sup> Taking this narrative in its naked simplicity, and neglecting altogether the subject of varnish, Count Secco Suardi deduces from it that Van Eyck substituted for the viscous boiled oils of the old times the more fluid ones obtain-

<sup>1</sup> Sulla scoperta ed Introduzione in Italia dell' odierno sistema di dipingere ad olio. Memoria del conte Giovanni Secco Suardi. 8<sup>o</sup>. Milano 1858.

<sup>2</sup> Eastlake. *Materials* u. s.

<sup>3</sup> Vasari. u. s. IV. 75—6.



able from linseed and nuts without boiling. The objections to this theory are practical and manifold, and it is to be borne in mind that, if mere oils such as Count Suardi describes had been exclusively employed in the altar-piece of the Agnus Dei, we should not have to notice the curious projections of surfaces which mark the panels of that masterpiece, projections in which the use of some sort of varnish mixed with pigments is apparent. We should, therefore, prefer to the theory of Count Suardi that of Sir Charles Eastlake, who considers the last paragraph of Vasari's statement to embody the experiments and discoveries of years, and to involve the production of a composite medium, other than unboiled linseed and nut oil. It is highly improbable that the drying qualities of these oils should have been unknown to the Van Eycks, equally improbable that Vasari should have meant to convey that it was so. It is much more likely that he intended to express that the Van Eycks after repeated experiments found no oils more siccative than linseed or nut oil, but thought it highly desirable to make them more siccative than they were by nature. We may suppose them to have succeeded in this endeavour and to have found a new varnish. In what the substances consisted which the Van Eycks mixed with linseed and nut oils cannot be determined with certainty; but it is obvious that they were resins, and the mixture of the medium so obtained with pigments was the real discovery for which they received the thanks of the Italians. After this first step had been taken a second one was its corollary.

The mixture of the new medium with pigments rendered their tones more vigorous, so that the necessity for the *coloured* varnish was superseded. The

object of Van Eyck, which was first to obtain a more drying coloured varnish, was at last to secure a colourless vehicle; for the vigour which was given to tempera by the last coat of preservative oleo-resinous varnish was acquired without that means. From the very time, therefore, when the medium was employed mixed with pigments, the old coloured varnish was superseded, and it became imperative to apply, as a preservative, a pure and colourless medium. The final studies of John Van Eyck must then of necessity have been to liquefy, as well as to purify his vehicle. It was evident that the old varnish, which was laid on tempera with a sponge, or with the hand, was far too viscous to be useful in mixing colours, and must, therefore, be liquefied. By means of its use the proceedings of the old painters were changed; from tempera pictures partially painted in oil, no doubt there was a change to oil pictures partially painted in tempera, and from that to pictures altogether in oil.

It is evidence at once of the large and important share which Hubert had in producing the *Agnus Dei*, and of the reverence in which he was held by those who ordered it, that when he died, on the 18th of September 1426, leaving the altar-piece unfinished, his body was consigned to the grave in the crypt of the Vydts Chapel. A further proof of the respect in which he was held as an artist is the fact that an arm said to have been severed from his body was preserved in a casket above the portal of Saint Bavon.<sup>1</sup> An epitaph with which he was honoured at his death embodies in

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, pp. 200, 203. *Værnewyk*, Hist. v. Belgie, u. s. p. 119. Sanderus, (A.) *De Brug. Erud. Clar Lib. i.* p. 39. "Decessit Gandavi, et sepultus in latere sinistro anterioris partis Ecc. S. Joh. Bapt." Lucas de Heere in Van Mander u. s. p. 202.

Flemish rhymes the piety and realism of his countrymen.<sup>1</sup>

That the first picture to which the name of Hubert can be traced with certainty is also the only one with any claims to originality, is a fact unparalleled in the case of an artist so great as the elder Van Eyck. It is not unusual to find panels in continental galleries catalogued as by Hubert, but their claim to be considered genuine is very slender indeed. We stumble here and there upon some very fine creations, such as the St. Jerom of the Naples Museum, or the Epiphany in the Lichtenstein Collection; but fine as these pictures are

<sup>1</sup> "Take warning from me, ye who walk over me; I was as you are, but am now buried dead beneath you. Thus it appears that neither art nor medicine availed me; art, honour, wisdom, power, affluence are spared not when death arrives. I was called Hubert van Eyck. I am now food for worms. Formerly known and highly honoured in painting, this all was shortly after turned to nothing. It was in the year of the Lord, one thousand four hundred and twenty six, on the 18th day of September, that I rendered up my soul to God, in suffering. Pray God for me, ye who love art, that I may attain to his sight, Flee sin, turn to the best (objects), for you must follow me at last." Or in the original:

Spiegelt u an my, die op my treden,  
Ick was als gy, nu ben beneden  
Begraven doot, als is an schijne,  
My ne help raedt, Const, noch medicijne  
Const, eer, wijsheyt, macht, rijckheyt groot  
Is onghespaert, als comt die Doot.  
Hubrecht van Eyck was ick ghenant,  
Nu spijse der wormen voormaels bekant.  
In Schilderije seer hooghe gheeert:  
Corts na was yet, in niete verkeert.  
In't jaer des Heeren, des zijt ghewes,  
Duysent, vier hondert, twintich en ses,  
In de maendt September achthien daghen viel  
Dat ick mit pijnen Godt gaf mijn siel.  
Bidt Godt voor my die Const minnen,  
Dat ick zijn aensicht moet ghewinnen,  
En vliedt zonde, keert u ten besten;  
Want ghy my volghen moet ten lesten.—

V. Mander, *u s.*, p. 202. *Værnewyck*, p. 119, C. XLVII.

they do not bear the unmistakable stamp of Hubert's hand.

With what persistence and success masterpieces of the Flemish school were sent from the Netherlands to Italy in the 15th century has been made tolerably clear in a work recently issued by the authors of these pages; and as it may be conducive to a better understanding of the subject before us to notice a few of these masterpieces, there is some excuse for making the following quotation:

"The testimony of numerous authors unanimously proves that there was a large trade in pictures between the ports of Flanders and Italy; and we have it from Vasari that Flemish merchants took the compositions of the best Northerners to the Mediterranean; but the traders who imported the choice things of this kind also dealt in those of the second and third class, all of which found buyers in Italy... The purest product of unmixed Flemish type extant at Naples and the best pictorially as well as technically is the St. Jerom of the Naples Museum, which before it came into its present place adorned an altar in San Lorenzo. The saint in his brown frock sits in an arm chair, a raised nimbus round his head, a copious beard falling from his chin. With one hand he grasps the lion's paw, with the other he holds a knife and probes the wound. The lion, with tail outstretched sits firmly on his quarters. To the left is a table on which the cardinal's hat is lying; behind it a desk and a cupboard with a book, a bottle and an hour-glass. A couple of shelves lining the low wall of the hut are strewn with volumes and manuscripts. The grouping is masterly, the saint stern and admirably draped in cloth of drooping fold, the lion is grand in the calm of his repose. Every part is

drawn and modelled with conscious power; and such is the minuteness of the finish in every line that we count the hairs of Jerom's beard or the lion's mane, the nails in the floor and the veinings of the boards. The flesh, of a warm and dusky brown, is shaded in deep leaden olive, and the tone of the whole surface is full of fine gradations. If there be a defect to note, it is the small size of the room as compared with the figures.<sup>1</sup>

Of unadulterated Flemish origin likewise, and once a part of the same altarpiece is "St. Francis distributing the rules of his order" in the chapel of San Francesco at San Lorenzo Maggiore. The saint stands between kneeling votaries, whilst two angels hold scrolls above his head. It is a picture of the Van der Weyden school, careful to a fault in outline and detail, of varied character in the heads, of a dim ruddiness in tone and a curious rigidity in pose.<sup>2</sup> Feebler but in the same style is an entombment in San Domenico Maggiore; of later date a St. Vincent, in benediction with ten scenes from his legend at San Pietro Martire. We may consider this last production—a capital one of its kind—to have been painted by some

<sup>1</sup> Naples National Gall. Neapolit. sch. XIIIth and XIVth century No. 6. Wood, 4 f. 10½ long by 4 f. 0½. A date—1436—on this picture has been spoken of but does not exist. Compare Criscuolo and others quoted in Catalani, *Discorso su' Monumenti patrii*, 80. Napoli 1842. pp. 10. 13. Dr. Waagen, in his *Essay on Hubert and J. Van Eyck*, ascribed this picture to Hubert Van Eyck. Passavant (*Kunstblatt*, 1843, No. 47) thinks it was painted by "Colantonio in the Van Eyck style." The commentators of Vas., u. s. I. note to 163, assign it to John Van Eyck, and say it is the panel described by Vasari as of old belonging to Lorenzo de' Medici.

<sup>2</sup> Naples, San Lorenzo Maggiore. This panel, at one time framed together with the St. Jerom attributed to Colantonio del Fiore, remained in San Lorenzo, when the St. Jerom was separated from it. (See Catalani, *Discorso*, u. s. 11.)



Italianized Fleming, if not by a Germanized Italian, in the latter half of the 15th century; its brown but rich and blended colour, well distributed groups and broken drapery almost suggesting the hand of the author of the St. Jerom, grown older and locally Neapolitan.<sup>1</sup> Belgian again, but most unattractive is a composite altarpiece in the crypt church of San Severino at Naples, in the principal course of which the titular bishop sits enthroned between the Baptist and Evangelist, St. Sosius and St. Savinus. In the upper course the Virgin helps the infant Christ to cherries from a basket, and St. Jerom, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Gregory are placed in half lengths at the sides. There is much gravity of mien in St. Severinus and St. Jerom, but the Evangelist might have been drawn by a Rhenish disciple of Van der Weyden, and the drapery is altogether Flemish in cast. Dim tints, sharp contours, and high surface shadows are characteristic peculiarities of treatment.<sup>2</sup> That the St. Jerom should have been ascribed to Hubert and John Van Eyck and Colantonio, the St. Francis to Colantonio and Zingaro, the St. Vincent and St. Severin to Zingaro,<sup>3</sup> is due on the one hand to the inexperience of judges, on the

<sup>1</sup> Naples, San Pietro Martire, 3d chapel to the right as you enter. Wood. St. Vincent Ferrer stands erect with a book, in benediction in a niche. In the framing at the sides and base are eleven panels, the uppermost of which, angel and Virgin annuntiate, are modern additions (17th century). Amongst the subjects are St. Vincent preaching. St. Vincent in prayer before an image of the Madonna. He restores to life a decapitated child. He receives the blessing of Christ. Vow of mariners in a storm. St. Vincent cures a woman possessed of a devil. Death of St. Vincent. The colours are embrowned by age, the compositions are lively and well put together.

<sup>2</sup> Naples, Crypt church of S. Severino, Wood, figures nearly life size; treatment mixed tempera and oil. The panels are injured by neglect and repainting in every part.

<sup>3</sup> De Dominici, u. s. Catalani, Discorso, pp. 11. 13, and Chiese di Napoli. II. 166.

other hand to a wish on the part of annalists to create a Neapolitan school at the expense of strangers".<sup>1</sup>

A curious record of comparatively recent discovery has disclosed the existence of a panel by Hubert Van Eyck. The published accounts of Blaisse Hütter, first "varlet de chambre" and confidential secretary of the Archduke Ernest, governor general of the Low Countries, contain an inventory of the treasures left by that prince at his death in 1595. In the latter is the following entry:—"Saint Mary with the Infant; near her is an Angel, and St. Bernard. By Rupert (? Hubert) Van Eyck."<sup>2</sup>

Of pictures attributed to Hubert one, a very inferior production, is the "Virgin with the donors" in the Antwerp Gallery.<sup>3</sup>

"St. Catherine", in the Belvedere, at Vienna, is by an imitator of the Van Eycks;<sup>4</sup> the ornaments being coarse, the flesh tints grey, and the modelling rough. A picture by Hubert Van Eyck is described in catalogues as having once belonged to M. von Kronstern, at Nembs, near Ploen, Holstein.

A triptych in the Lichtenstein Gallery representing the Adoration of the Magi is interesting as a work of art. The Virgin, in a blue mantle, holds the Infant on her knee, and the donor is at her feet, clothed in a red mantle, near one of the kings. Two shepherds are looking through the window, and to the

<sup>1</sup> History of Painting in North Italy. 8<sup>o</sup>. London 1871. II. pp. 79 and ff.

<sup>2</sup> Coremans, ap. De Laborde, u. s., vol. I. Introd. p. CXIII.

<sup>3</sup> Antwerp. Mus. No. 517, 0.29 by 0.19 f.; the Virgin gives the breast to the child, on one side of the diptych; on the other are the donors;—from the Ertborn coll. now catalogued as "unknown."

<sup>4</sup> Vienna, Belv. 2d floor, room 2, Flemish schools, No. 22. Wood, 7" by 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Austrian measure. See postea.

right are an ass and oxen. On the left wing are the young king and the Moor; on the right, a canon supported by St. Stephen. The work is highly finished and minute; but neither Hubert nor John Van Eyck are the painters of those cold grey shadows. The picture is of the Van Eyck school, executed at the latter end of the fifteenth century<sup>1</sup>.

A portrait, said to be that of Rollin, in the Museum of Dijon, is attributed to Hubert, but is clearly of the close of the fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

An Ecce Homo, or head of the Saviour, once in the Wallerstein collection, at Kensington, though assigned to Hubert Van Eyck, is as distant from the style of that painter as it is from that of John Van Eyck. The type of the countenance is repulsive and devoid of character or expression. It is feeble in design and colour, and has none of the qualities of the great master whose name it bears.<sup>3</sup> It is one of the numerous dry imitations of John Van Eyck's Christ, in the Berlin Museum.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Passavant has attributed this picture to John Van Eyck. *Kunstblatt*, 1841, p. 304.

<sup>2</sup> No. 284, Dijon. Cat. M. 0.81 h. by 0.62.

<sup>3</sup> No. 52, in Catalogue of the late collection of Prince Wallerstein at Kensington Palace. On wood, 1 ft. by  $7\frac{3}{4}$  in. English. D. Waagen (*Kugler*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Lond. 1860. p. 108) assigns this picture to Van der Weyden the younger.

<sup>4</sup> No. 528, Berlin Museum.

## CHAPTER III.

JOHN VAN EYCK.

PHILIP THE GOOD, Duke of Burgundy and Count of Flanders, one of John Van Eyck's most cherished patrons, was married early to Michelle of France, sister, as we saw, of the Duke of Orléans, who murdered Jean Sans Peur. The suspicions of Philip as to his wife's implication in the massacre of Montereau, and the necessity under which he subsequently laboured of visiting the numerous provinces into which his dominions were divided, contributed much to affect his character. In policy he was driven by revenge to a course which tended to increase rather than diminish the misfortunes of France. In his social relations he was led by change of place and roving habits to fleeting amours and licentiousness.<sup>1</sup> Continually on horseback, and wandering

<sup>1</sup> Chastelain says of him: "Avait en lui aussi le vice de la chair; estait durement lubrique et fraisle en cet endroit." *Esloge de Chastelain ap. Buchon Coll. de Doc<sup>ts</sup>. Vol. 41. p. 28.*

It was also said of Philip: "He was like most of the princes of his time a man of pleasure. At this period (1422) the attention which he paid to Lady Salisbury offended her husband, and is mentioned as one of the causes which led to the estrangement between him and the English chiefs. *E. E. Crowe. Hist. of France.* 8<sup>o</sup>. Lond. 1860. Vol. II. p. 147.

He had numerous bastards; and some curious entries are preserved as to his treatment of mistresses: "A Jeannette de Presles, mère de Anthoine, bastard de MdS. pour don pour elle aidier à soustenir son estat . . . XIX fr." "Pour elle (J. de Presles) à soy diffraier au partement dicellui S. de la ville de Gand. XV fr." "A Michele de Buisson cousine de Jehanette de Presles mère de Anthoine bastard de MS. aussi pour don à elle fait MdS. pour soy en aller à Paris, dont elle est, après ce que les nopces de

from place to place, he contented himself with the society of his knights and retainers, and varied it with that of numerous mistresses. He drank hard and frequently, and had a philosophical indifference to the quality of his boon companions, which gave occasion to Chastelain to relate that he "offended the nobles by keeping company with valets."<sup>1</sup> A rude joviality towards inferiors, which gave rise to the flattering epithet of "Le Bon," and a certain roughness towards men of better station, became early characteristic of his nature. He was not restrained by any feeling, moral or religious, from the commission of very unpardonable acts, and he did his share of deeds which do not bear the light. He was very truculent on occasion, as at Dinant, where the city was destroyed and the inhabitants of both sexes were butchered. He sometimes sacrificed truth to expediency, yet he had a rude code of honour, the fruit of his early education in the laws of chivalry, then considerably on the decline. He once said to the Archbishop of Narbonne and to Louis the XIth's Chancellor Morvilliers—"I may have broken my word to women, but to men never."<sup>2</sup> He was ambitious, yet afraid of making his duchy a great state, for he said to Morvilliers in 1464—"I wish everyone to know that if I had liked I might have been king."<sup>3</sup> For all his licentious-

sadite cousine ont été faictes à Brouxelles XIX fr". *Arch. de Lille Compte Jean Abonnel* 1431—2. *Apud de Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourg.*, u. s. Vol. I. p. 266.

<sup>1</sup> "Avait de condition encore qu'en chambre se tenait clos souvent avec valets, et s'en indignaient nobles hommes." *Esloge de Chastelain. Buchon*, u. s., Vol. 42. p. 29. The Duke of Burgundy, "secretly", says Van Mander, gave John Van Eyck the rank of councillor, the said Duke being fond of his company, as Alexander of old was of the company of Apelles. This flatters both the Duke and the painter. V. Mander, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> See Petitot, u. s. Notice sur O. de la Marche. Vol. IX. p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



ness he was not without religion, and he is gently rallied by De la Marche for stopping to say his orisons when news was brought that the storm of Luxemburg had begun.<sup>1</sup> He shared his grandfather's partiality for display, and liked to collect the masterpieces of the numerous statuaries, goldsmiths, painters, arrasmakers, and miniaturists who frequented his court. It was natural that, hearing of John Van Eyck's release from his engagements with John of Bavaria, he should resolve to attach him to his service. The commission by which the appointment was made bore the date of May 19, 1425, but has not been preserved, and is stated in numerous accounts to have been issued at Bruges. It entitled the artist to a salary of 100 livres per annum, a livery servant, and two horses,<sup>2</sup> and, perhaps, to rent for a lodging. According to Guicciardini, John Van Eyck resided habitually in the "triumphant city of Bruges;"<sup>3</sup> and it has been assumed that charges for rent made by the Duke's agents in 1426-8 have reference to the hire of his house at Bruges. But some reasons have been adduced for thinking that John Van Eyck, in the first years of his service with Philip of Burgundy, made a stay at Lille.<sup>4</sup> That he now had no fixed connection with Ghent might be inferred from

<sup>1</sup> O. de la Marche in Petitot. IX. 392-3.

<sup>2</sup> See antea, and an ordonnance of Philip the Good dated Dec. 14, 1426 at Bruges, in De Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, u. s. I. XL.

<sup>3</sup> Guicciardini, u. s. p. 123-4.

<sup>4</sup> (November) "A Miquiel Ravary pour le louage d'une maison en laquelle Johannes de Eck, varlet de chambre et peintre de MdS. a par l'ordonnance et commandement de icellui S. demouré par deux années, finissans au jour Saint Jehan Baptiste darrenier passé, comme appert par quittance dudit Michiel, et certification de MdS. de Croy, sur ce XLVI fr. III s. Compte de Guy Guibaut, 1er Janv. 1427, jusqu'au 31. Dec. 1428."—*De Laborde, Les Ducs de B.*, u. s. Vol. I. pp. 255, 256. M. A. Pinchart shows that Ravary was a merchant and a citizen at Lille (Annot. u. s. CXCV).

this that when Hubert died, his heirs, who can be no other than John and Lambert van Eyck, were charged with a tax only levied upon non-residents.<sup>1</sup> There was more reason for his acquiring a fixed dwelling at Bruges than anywhere else. Bruges of the middle ages was greatly distinguished from Bruges of to-day, by the greatness of its trade and commerce. It is difficult to realise the fact that the quiet inland town which is now so remarkable for the solitude of its grassgrown streets and the stagnant waters of its canals was once a flourishing port, secured by its walls from attack by land, and safe by its inland position from the guns of cruisers. Through Sluys—now a village far from the sea—it communicated with the channel. The largest caravels and galleys were floated up to its quays, which from year's end to year's end were littered with the costly produce of the Mediterranean and the Levant, or the wools of Great Britain. Bruges was truly "a triumphant city," worthy of holding a court enriched by the wealth of its patricians and foreign merchants, and essentially fitted for that cause to support a colony of artists.

Whether it be true or not that John Van Eyck acquired a residence at Bruges immediately after Hubert's death, there is no reason to doubt that he frequently left the place of his usual abode to follow the restless Philip in his wanderings. Of the Duke's powers of locomotion there is curious evidence in chronicles. "In 1426 he held high council in Flanders as to the

<sup>1</sup> The records of the tax paid by strangers to the city of Ghent contain an entry for this year, of VI sous paid by Hubert's heirs. The entry runs thus—"1426, Van den hoire van Lubrecht van Eyke VI s. g." This is a confirmation of the date of the painter's death, and a proof that his family was not native of Ghent. *Carton, u. s.*, p. 269.

war (in Holland), then rode to Boullongne on a pilgrimage; returned from thence into Artois, where he levied large aids of money, and finally back to Flanders, where he was met by captains summoned from Burgundy, amongst them the prince of Orange. Off again at last to Holland with a few horse, and waged strong war on those who took part for the Duchess" (Jacqueline now married to the Duke of Gloucester).<sup>1</sup> Just at this time, and, in or before the month of July preceding the death of Hubert, John Van Eyck started "on a pilgrimage" and "travelled on a secret journey," the discharge for his expenses being given at Leyden.<sup>2</sup> He then went on a second mission of similar secrecy and greater expense, for which he received payment before the end of October.<sup>3</sup> There is something in

<sup>1</sup> Buchon collection des chroniques françaises, VIII. p. 278. Memoires de J. Lefevre Seigneur de St. Remy quoted by A. Pinchart, in Annotations, u. s. CXCVII.

<sup>2</sup> "A Johannes de Eick, varlet de chambre et peintre de mondit seigneur, la somme de quatre vins unze livres, cinq solz, du pris de XL gros, monnoye de Flandres, la livre, laquelle du commandement et ordonnance de MdS. leur a été paiée, bailliée et delivrée comptant, tant pour faire certain pèlerinage que MdS. pour lui, et en son nom, lui a ordonné faire, dont autre déclaracion il n'en veult estre faicte, comme sur ce que par icelui seigneur lui povoit estre deu à cause de certain loingtain voiaige secret que semblablement il lui a ordonné faire en certain lieux que aussi ne veult aultrement déclairer, sicomme il appert par mandement de déscharge de MdS. sur ce fait. — Donné à Leyden le XXVI<sup>e</sup> jour d'Aoust l'an MCCCCXXI garni de quittance faicte le XIII<sup>e</sup> de juillet M. III<sup>e</sup> J<sup>e</sup>. XXVJ : III<sup>xx</sup> XI l. V. s. Compte de Guy Guilbaut du III<sup>e</sup> jour d'Octobre l'an Mil CCCC vint et cinq et finist au III<sup>e</sup> jour d'Octobre l'an Mil CCCC vint et six. — *De Laborde, u. s., Les Ducs de Bourgogne*. Vol. I. p. 225. Pinchart Annot. u. s. CXCVII.

<sup>3</sup> "A Johannes de Eick, varlet de chambre et peintre de MdS. la somme de trois cens soixante liures du pris de XL gros, monnoie de Flandres, la liure, laquelle MS. lui a ordonné estre bailliée comptant pour certain compte, traictié et appointment fait avec lui pour la parpaye de tout ce qu'il lui peut estre deu à cause de certains loingtains voiaiges secrets que MdS. lui a piéca ordonné faire en certains lieux, dont il ne veut aultre dé-

these allusions to secrecy, something in the cost of these journeys suggestive of transactions of a delicate nature; and it is hardly to be doubted that Van Eyck was sent to paint the likeness of some princess who might claim to become the wife of the bald and ugly but desirable husband Philip of Burgundy. If this supposition be correct, it explains why the Duke's painter was favoured beyond other members of his household. The cost of the Dutch war was so great and Philip was placed in such pecuniary straits by its prosecution, that his exchequer ran low. He revised his pension list and reduced the salaries of several officers; but he excepted Van Eyck, and after-

claration estre faicte si qu'il appert par lettres de mandement de descharge de MdS. sur ce faictes données à Bruges le XXVIj jour d'Octobre l'an Mil CCCXXVI garny de quittance du dit Johannes . . . IIj<sup>e</sup> LX liv." *Compte de Guy Guilbaut* p. 3 mois du III<sup>e</sup> Oct. 1426 au XXXj Dec. ensuivant. *De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u.s.*, Vol. I. p. 242—3. *Pinchart u.s.* CXCVII.

<sup>1</sup> "A Jehan de Heick, pointre et varlet de chambre de MS. le Duc, lequel icellui S. a retenu aux gaiges de C liv. parisien monnoie de Flandres, par an, pour les causes contenues tant en ses lettres sur ce faictes, comme ou compte précédent; et lesquels gaiges MdS. nonobstant que par certaines ses ordonnances faictes le XIII<sup>e</sup> jour de decembre CCCXXVI a entre autres choses révoqué les pensions et gaiges d'aucuns ses officiers et serviteurs qu'ilz prenoient à luy, non exprimés es lettres de sa nouvelle ordonnance. commençant icelle le premier jour de janvier Mil CCC vint et six, toutesvoies son entencion n'est pas que es dites ordonnances soit comprise la pension que prenoit de lui son dit pointre, mais au regart de ce, veult et ordonne que les paiemens de la dicte pension, d'illec en avant tant comme il lui plaira, soit ententuee, en mandant à sondit receveur que icelle pension il paie aux termes accoustumés qui sont moictié à la Saint Jehan, et l'autre moictié au Noel comme il appert par ses lettres patentes sur ce faictes et données en sa ville de Bruges le III jour de Mars Mil CCCXXVII servant tant pour le dit pointre comme pour la pension de la damoiselle du Berkin cy après. Pour ce par vertu dicelles lettres cy rendues avec quittance dudit Jehan de Heick, pour sadiete pension et les termes de la Saint Jehan et Noel Mil CCCXXVII la dicte somme de C liv. *Compte de Gautier Poulain* Janvier 1426 à Decembre 1427."—*De Laborde, Les Ducs de B.*, Vol. I. pp. 246, 247. *Pinchart Annot.* CXCI.



wards gave him a special gratification for professional services.<sup>1</sup>

It has not been ascertained, yet it is not unlikely that John Van Eyck, in 1428, accompanied André de Thoulangeon in his fruitless attempt to obtain the hand of a Spanish princess. We should think it probable that he did so because a record of that year refers to his being sent away on secret service previous to his despatch to Portugal "in company with Monseigneur de Roubaix."<sup>2</sup>

André de Thoulangeon had scarcely returned from Spain when Roubaix was appointed to lead a romantic expedition to Lisbon, for the purpose of choosing a bride for Duke Philip. An offer was to be made to Isabel of Portugal to marry the richest and most powerful prince in Christendom; but the prince was to reserve for himself the right of breaking off the negotiation if Isabel's charms should appear to him less attractive than he had fancied them to be. In order to judge of those charms it was necessary to have a picture made by a trustworthy artist who should not overcharge but faithfully reproduce the reality. John Van Eyck was accordingly attached to the suite of Monseigneur de Roubaix, and the quaint

<sup>1</sup> "A Johannes de Heecht peintre de MdS. que icellui seigneur luy a donné pour considéracion des bons et agréables services qu'il luy a faiz de son mestier et autrement comme appert par sa quittance . . . XX liv.—Compte de Guy Guilbaut, 1426—27."—*De Laborde, Les Ducs de B. u. s.*, vol. II. p. 390.

[Aout 1427] "A Jehannes Eyk, Varlet de Chambre et peintre de M.d.S. que icellui S.luy a donné tant par considéracion des bons et agréables services qu'il luy a faiz tant au fait de sondit office, comme autrement, et pour le aidier et soustenir à avoir ses nécessitez afin plus honnorablement il le puist servir, comme appert par sa quittance. C. l. Compte Guy Guilbaut 1426—27. *De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s.* Vol. II. p. 392.

<sup>2</sup> See the following note.



embassy started in two Venetian galleys from Sluys on the 19th of October 1428.<sup>1</sup> It is characteristic of the slow navigation of those days that this gala squadron took two months to reach the Tagus. On the 13th of November it put into Sandwich; between that date and the 2d of December it touched successively at Plymouth and Falmouth. On the 11th of December it stopped at Bayona in Galicia; on the 16th it anchored at Cascaes in the mouth of the Tagus, and on the 18th it reached Lisbon. After a short stay in the capital the embassy rode to Arrayollos and thence to Aviz where it was received at court, and John Van Eyck painted the likeness of the infanta.<sup>2</sup> Towards the close of the first fortnight in February, the preliminaries of a marriage treaty were negotiated and sent "with the likeness" to the Duke of Burgundy.<sup>3</sup> And now came a period of leisure for the envoys; they had to wait for Philip's reply, yet not to cause too much expense to their hosts; they went on a pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostella in Galicia, they visited John the II<sup>d</sup> king

<sup>1</sup> "A Johannes de Eick varlet de chambre et peintre de M.d.S. que icellui S. luy a donné tant pour considération des services qu'il lui a faiz, fait journalment et espoire que encores fera ou tams à venir ou fait de sondit office, comme autrement, comme en recompensacion de certains voyaiges secrez que, par l'ordonnance et pour les affaires d'icellui S. il a faiz, et du voyage qu'il fait présentement avec et en la compaignie de M.d.S. de Roubaix, dont il ne veult aucune déclaration estre faite, comme appert par sa quittance sur ce . . . . . VIII<sup>xx</sup> liv." *Compte Guy Guilbaut*, dep. 1<sup>er</sup> Janvier 1427, jusqu'au 31 Dec. 1428. De Laborde, u. s. Les Ducs de B. Vol. I. p. 251. Pinchart. annot. CC.

<sup>2</sup> "Avec ce les dits ambaxadeurs, par ung nommé maistre Jehan de Eyck, varlet de chambre de mondit Seigneur de Bourgoigne et excellant maistre en art de peinture, firent paindre bien au vif la figure de madite dame l'infante Elizabeth." See *Collection de documents inédits concernant l'histoire de la Belgique* par L. P. Gachard. 4<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1834. Vol. II. p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib. ib. ib.*

of Castile, the Duke of Arjona, near Jaën; they paid their respects to the Moor, Mahomet, king of Granada. May saw the whole party assembled at Lisbon, June at Cintra. Philip's consent arrived, and the marriage by proxy was celebrated in July. Festivities of various kinds filled up the time till the 8th of October when the Portuguese fleet with its bridal burden left the Tagus. There were fourteen sail in the fleet, but they remained a very short time in company. For forty days the ships were driven on and off the coast of Spain, the weather so affecting de Roubaix that he remained for a fortnight in the harbour of Ribadeo, in Galicia. When the squadron hove anchor, it was scattered by the winds,—the infanta, with but two remaining ships, being driven into Plymouth; from whence she made her way with difficulty to Sluys on Christmas-day.

The splendour of the ceremonies attending the landing were some sort of foil to the tediousness and perils of the voyage. The merchants of Bruges outbid each other in loyalty and show. The road through which the procession passed was lined with tapestries of splendid workmanship. Sixty four trumpeters, bearing silver instruments, led the way, whilst deputations from the states and trades displayed their gorgeous dresses.<sup>1</sup> The marriage ceremony was solemnized with every kind of brilliancy; the order of the Golden Fleece was founded on the occasion, and the Sires de Roubaix and de Lannoy were made knights of the order. Of John Van Eyck's reward no account has been preserved. His portrait of Isabel of Portugal disappeared, and all that remains to us in respect of his professional practice is an entry in the catalogue of Margaret of

<sup>1</sup> Marchant. *Flandria descripta* Anv. 1596. p. 284. Sanderus *Flandria Illust.* p. 76—7.

Austria, which refers to one of his pictures called "la belle Portugalaïse."<sup>1</sup>

From this time forward, it seems certain John Van Eyck settled at Bruges, where he had a house of his own, for though a gap in the chronology of his life occurs in 1430, there is evidence that he was sent for from Bruges in 1431 to visit the castle of Hesdin where Philip of Burgundy was spending money in laying out gardens and water works.<sup>2</sup> John's principal occupation now was, no doubt, the completion of the Agnus Dei of Ghent the panels of which were finished in 1432, but even this important work did not take up his whole time, as we find that he completed in the same year the Madonna of Ince Hall, which bears his name and is dated from Bruges.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Le Glay. *Inventaire de Marguerite d'Autriche*, and the same by De Laborde. 8<sup>o</sup>. Paris. 1850. p. 26. The "Belle Portugalaïse" existed in 1516 at Malines. It represented a lady in a red habit with sable trimmings, attended by St. Nicholas, and was a present to Margaret from Don Diego de Guevara.

<sup>2</sup> "A Johanne Deik, peintre, que M. S. a samblablement ordonné luy estre baillié et déliuré comptant, pour estre venu, par son commandement et ordonnance, dès sa ville de Bruges à Hesdin, deuers lui, auquel lieu il l'auoit mandé pour aucunes besoignes ésquelles il le vouloit employer. Pour ce et pour son retour, comme appert pas sa quittance sur ce rendue...XIX francs. Compte de Jehan Abonnel, dep. le 1 Janvier 1430, jusqu'au 31 Dec. 1431. *De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s.* Vol. I. p. 257. Pinchart. Annot., u. s. CCIII.—That John Van Eyck bought a house in Bruges was proved by the following extracts from the books of St. Donatian at Bruges:

"Receptum anno 1430 in certis redditibus novi libri infra villam in officii Sancti Nicolai. Johannes Van Eyck XXX sol. par." De Stoop. *Moniteur Universel*, Dec. 1847. No. 335. — *C. Carton. Ann. de la Soci. d'Emulation de Bruges*, tom v. sec. 2. No. 34, p. 271. Mr. Weale after looking over these books, proves that John Van Eyck bought the house in 1432. He further shows that the house was situate in the present Rue de la Main d'Or, E 15. No. 7 bis. (See Notes sur Jean Van Eyck, u. s. p. 6—14).

<sup>3</sup> Van Mander says: "Nae dat Johannes de tafel te Ghent voldæen hadde heeft hy weder zijn wooninghe ghehouden te

If we look back at John Van Eyck's career till this time we find much to prove that he was ready and prolific as a painter, but little to give us an insight into his style. One picture, and one only, has been preserved, which purports to have been executed previous to his connexion with the Duke of Burgundy. It is a "consecration of Thomas à Becket," said to have been presented to Henry the Vth of England by the Duke of Bedford, and now in the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth. On the framing of the panel we read the following inscription:

"JOHĒS. DE EYCK. FECIT+ĀÑO. MCCCC. ŽĪ  
30 OCTOBRIS."

Under an oval canopy on the edges of which the cross-keys and a coat of arms are emblazoned, two bishops place the mitre on the head of Thomas à Becket who reads the mass of consecration from a book in the hands of a kneeling priest. A third bishop, a king, and a numerous suite stand about the principal group observed from a respectful distance by minor dignitaries of the church. The scene is laid in a cathedral and seen through an archway forming part of it. Behind the canopy a green cloth acts as foil to the figures, its effect partially weakened by a pendant cord to which a medal and crown are hung. The long lank figures, marshalled in defiance of the laws of perspective, are as rigid and unpleasant as we might expect them to have been had they been painted by some of John's own disciples. The surface is all but

Brugghe." If this were true, which may be doubted, we should assume that John was at Ghent in 1430, and again between 1431 and 2, but he might also have been at Lille or elsewhere.

covered with the dirt of ages or with repaints, and there is not a single portion, except a bit of the red canopy, of which the original condition can be discerned. Most in the character of Van Eyck is the face of a man to the right of Thomas à Becket and that of a priest on the left carrying a cross: with these exceptions the heads have lost their original impress. The colours in their present state are of a dark and monotonous reddish tinge, the draperies muffled, broken, and superabundant. The utter absence of linear perspective would not exclude the authorship of Van Eyck. That of aerial perspective might possibly do so. Both are absolutely wanting. We might suppose that the subject was drawn and signed by the master as it is in the St. Barbara at Antwerp, and that it was subsequently daubed over by incapable hands. Under no circumstances can we now accept it as a genuine work of Van Eyck in 1421.<sup>1</sup>

Far superior to this injured composition and on a much smaller scale, the little Madonna of Ince Hall, finished in 1432, gives a good idea of the master's skill, though a less exalted one than the Agnus Dei. It is signed:

"Completum anno domini MCCCCXXXII per Johannem de Eyck. Brugis," and bears that favourite and modest motto which he always repeats: "Als ikh kan."

The Virgin is dressed in a blue tunic and a gorgeous red mantle, the folds of which cover the ground about her; she holds a book before the Infant Saviour,

<sup>1</sup> Chatsworth. Wood. 4 f. h. by 2 f. b. It is a curious proof of the late Dr. Waagen's occasional blindness that he thought this picture well preserved. Compare Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*. 8<sup>o</sup>. London. 1854. III. 349, and De Laborde. *La Renaissance des Arts. Additions au Tome I*. Paris, 1855. p. 599.



who sits on her knee, and playfully turns the leaves. A rich warm green dais, copiously adorned with arabesques, contrasts with the drapery near it. The scene is in one of those semi-obscure chambers lighted by tiny squares of glass, which Van Eyck was fond of depicting. A crystal vase on a table near the window is partially filled with water, and some oranges lie by its side. On a board to the left of the Virgin are a chandelier and a pot of brass. The Virgin's feet rest on a richly-coloured carpet covering a sombre floor. Were it not for a general crackling of the surface, which mars many parts, but especially the face of the Virgin, this picture might be pronounced in excellent preservation, having all the warmth and vigour of colour given to it by the master; and retaining, in consequence, both harmonious unity and softness of tone; a circlet of pearls holds back the brown hair of the Virgin, and makes it fall in thin wavy tresses over her shoulders; similar ornaments cover the upper part of the blue dress. The Saviour's head has a laughing expression, and light curly locks play about his forehead, giving an airy and happy cheerfulness to his face; a bold piece of white drapery partially covers his legs. The Divinity is thus represented without the moody gravity which so frequently mars the faces of Van Eyck's infants. The limbs and body are not too thin, and the hands and feet are fairly designed. The head of the Virgin is not free from the defect of length; but the eyes have a pleasing glance, and the hands are of a delicate shape. If the drapery be too copious and angular, and so detracts from the general effect, the colour in its depth and warmth counterbalances that fault, and combined with neat execution, gives the whole its pictorial value.

There is no doubt that John Van Eyck concentrated all the qualities inherent in his manner on the production of diminutive panels. He affords in this a bold contrast with the masters of the Italian schools, who exhibit the great qualities of art on surfaces of considerable extent. So long as his object was merely to elaborate a scene of which all the parts were within the compass of the eye at the distance usual to a painter at his easel, his sense of atmosphere and depth was perfect, and he laboured with all the advantages resulting from determined purpose and clearness of perception. But as the field over which his eye had to wander increased in magnitude by the enlargement of the panel, his judgment and innate sense of colour and ærial perspective, his knowledge of proportion, became less available; and he failed to produce the deep impression which is created by the *Agnus Dei*.<sup>1</sup>

The Madonna of Ince is but one of a series of pieces in which the chronology of John Van Eyck's practice is traced with positive certainty. We shall conclude from a minute examination of all these works that the master was never at a higher-level as regards proficiency than when he finished the altar-piece of the Lamb. In many subsequent pictures he carried the minutiae of technical handling and finish to the greatest perfection; but he never went beyond, though he may have approached, the subtlety of original thought, the power of expression, richness of colour, or boldness of treatment, which are so remarkable in the *Agnus Dei*. One of the principal grounds for supposing that Hubert was his superior in most of the qualities which go to

<sup>1</sup> Ince Hall, near Liverpool, seat of Mr. Weld Blundell. Wood, 9 inches by 6.

make up a first rate painter lies in this that John Van Eyck never after 1432 shows the sternness of power and the deep feeling for the severity of church art conspicuous in the triptych of St. Bavon. Too frequently he forgot mass and balanced light and shade for polish and minute finish. Too often he yielded to the temptation of sacrificing strong and ruddy tone to a delicate and affected pallor. Instead of clinging to the simplicity of drapery and forcible breadths of contour, which are so conspicuous in the large personages of the Agnus Dei, he fell into hardness of outline and angular break of dress folds; he displayed no progress in the representation of nude; nor did he ever rise to the conception of types preeminent for dignity or supernatural grandeur. In two points he remained great; he preserved the most delicate faculty for modulations of atmosphere in landscapes. He painted portraits with a realistic power almost unsurpassed in any school of the time.

It is a pity that so many of his renderings of representative men and women should have been lost. "Duke Philip before the Virgin Mary," missing since Margaret of Austria's time, "Isabel of Portugal", of which no mention is made in any descriptive books, would be useful to determine how much of flattery there may have been in the art of a realistic Fleming.<sup>1</sup> If we go down in the social scale, and look by turns at the portrait full lengths of Chancellor Rollin at the Louvre, and Arnolfini at the National Gallery; if from these we turn to busts and half lengths of which there are many beautiful specimens extant, no feature will be found more striking or more characteristic of the

<sup>1</sup> De Laborde. *Inventaire de Marguerite d'Autriche*, u. s. p. 24. Le Glay. Same collection. 1516, u. s.

artist than his desire to be true to nature. In the reproduction of flesh surfaces, in peculiar stiffnesses of action or movement and expression, which abound in persons who are condemned to sit; he is invariably on the outlook for minute details which he transfers with unwearying patience and consummate skill to panel. He surprises us by the effectiveness of his imitative power, but never exhibits the suggestive striving of one who watches and catches as they go the subtle and momentary passages so often graceful and redeeming even in ill favoured models. Amongst the smaller specimens of portrait that remain to us, that which first claims attention is the bust of a man, in the National Gallery, a man of forty-five, with marked but not handsome features, who stands in sunlight at a window, and holds in his right hand a roll of paper. He wears a green cap with hanging drapery, a red mantle turned over at the neck and lined with brown fur. The background is dark. On the yellowish window sill is the painter's usual signature with the Greek words "Τίμω-θεος," and the motto "Léal Souvenir." The drawing is careful, the painting blended to a fault, and the period of execution is 1432.<sup>1</sup>

A few months older and more powerfully wrought is another panel at the National Gallery,—a bust of a man with a red shawl bound round his head. This is a panel in which minute finish is combined with delicate modelling and strong relief, and a brown depth of colour. At this period of his career (1433) John Van Eyck is still in the form which marks the *Agnus Dei*. He follows nature into all its corners and recesses

<sup>1</sup> National Gallery. No. 290. Wood. 1 f. 1¼ h. by 7½ oil. "Signed: Factus Año Dm 1432. 10 Die, octobriz à Joh. de Eyck." Purchased from Herr C. Ross at Munich, in 1857.

without once betraying himself in a pencil stroke.<sup>1</sup> He is in the same form in Mr. Suermondt's larger portrait of the "man with the pinks," a marvel of imitation, a bust of a man of sixty seen at three quarters to the left, looking out of the picture but not at the spectator; the lips apart, the hands raised and closed and one of them grasping three wild pinks. The head is covered with a fur cap; and the collar of the grey pelisse with its fur lining is bound in red morocco over which hangs the silver chain and the cross and bell of the brotherhood of St. Anthony. What we see is not the man in pursuit of his daily avocations, but the sitter, whose features are galvanized into stillness, whose lips are kept open to damp the movements incident to breathing, whose hands are cramped by being held up too long. The face is beardless, weatherbeaten, and wrinkled; and we look into those wrinkles, and see how they are marked by touch and subtle modulations of tone and light and shade with a delicacy and power quite surpassing. The hands and face are disproportioned in size, the former being too small; the outlines are clear and correct, the projections marked. Colour, tone, transitions, effect, contour, and finish are masterly.<sup>2</sup>

Of earlier date perhaps than these, and peculiarly characteristic for the forcible depth of its colours, is "Chancellor Rollin kneeling at a prayer-desk before the

<sup>1</sup> London. National Gallery. No. 222. Wood, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. h. by 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; formerly in the Arundel and Middleton collections, inscribed: "Als ikh kan." Johes. de Eyck Me fecit. Año M. CCCO. 33. 2 Octobris.

<sup>2</sup> Aix la Chapelle. Suermondt Collection from the Engels Collection at Cologne; Wood a little above half life size. A ring is half way up the 4th finger of the right hand.—The pelisse is lined with fur, which is turned over at the wrists.

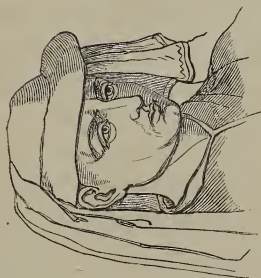


Virgin whose head is crowned by two gorgeously winged angels.”<sup>1</sup> At a balcony seen through the pillars of an arcade two men look down at a panorama of houses, steeples, bridges, and distant hills; and a minute inspection will be rewarded by the discovery of numerous figures in the background of streets and lanes. Here Van Eyck’s art is displayed in all its force and weakness;—admirable when we only look at the characteristic rendering of the scratch-wigged chancellor, or the adumbrations that cover the wondrous details of architecture, or the crystalline purity of a distance carried to a horizon of snow mountains miles away, disappointing when we look at the plain mask of the Virgin or the wooden shape of the aged babe naked on her knee; or the piled and broken drapery that rests upon the figures. It is of this picture that Filhol says, “it long adorned the sacristy of the cathedral at Autun, and Courtépée adds:—“An original picture may be seen in the sacristy of Notre Dame d’Autun, in which the Chancellor Rollin, in vestments of ceremony, is represented kneeling at the feet of the Virgin. The background of the picture shows the city of Bruges in perspective, and more than 2,000 (!) figures, of which the variety and attitudes can only be perceived with the assistance of a magnifying glass.”<sup>2</sup>

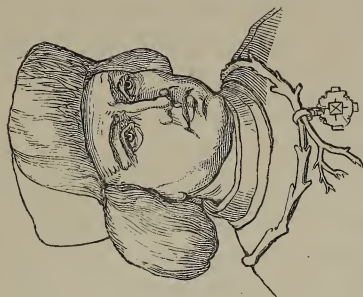
Of this class, but in point of time perhaps older, is the “Fount of Salvation” in the Museum of the Santissima Trinidad at Madrid, of which we learn from Ponz that it adorned a chapel in the Spanish Church of Valencia, from whence it was subsequently taken to

<sup>1</sup> Paris, Louvre. No. 162. Wood. M. 0,66 by 0,62. On the bordering of the Virgin’s dress: “Exultata in Libano.”

<sup>2</sup> Courtépée, *Descrip. Hist. et Topogr. du Duché de Bourgogne*. Vol. III. p. 451.



JOHN VAN EYCK.



HUBERT VAN EYCK.

From the Altar-piece in the Santa Trinita Museum at Madrid.



Segovia.<sup>1</sup> This grand altar-piece is exactly similar in spirit and composition to the *Agnus Dei* of St. Bavon. It is finished in the style and manner which characterised John Van Eyck in 1432; and, though it has been damaged by repeated moving and repairs, is still a fine example of Flemish art. The scene is laid in a mediæval court, of which the centre is a spire, in the pointed style of Sanct Lorenz of Nuremberg,—the purest form, perhaps, in which that architecture has been exhibited,—the filmy tracery of whose numerous spindles darts into the air with wondrous elegance, in all the glory of profuse and chosen ornament. This graceful spire forms a tabernacle, covering the seat on which the Saviour rests; whilst the Virgin and St. John the Evangelist, sit on each side in the attitude and vestments consecrated to them. The Lamb reposes at the Saviour's feet, and the symbols of the four Evangelists are on his chair, from beneath which the crystal stream of the spring of grace is flowing. The shallow current runs clear and limpid, floating the wafers of the host down three successive steps or planes into which the picture is divided, then falling in tiny jets from a Gothic fountain on the foreground. Two light pointed spires also of open work, in whose airy space angels are depicted, flank the throne, and give symmetry to the scene which they enclose. The sacred choristers sing their glorious psalms beneath the Saviour, sitting in a flowery meadow sprinkled with strawberries. The fountain separates the Roman Church from that of the heretics; a pope with the tiara triumphantly points to the wafers of the host, and holds the flag of hope; his followers,—a cardinal, at

<sup>1</sup> Antonio Ponz. *Viage de España*, Madrid. 18<sup>o</sup>. 1785—87. Vol. XI. p. 145.

whose feet an emperor is kneeling, a bishop, and others in secular costume, foremost amongst whom we notice Hubert and John Van Eyck—looking gravely on. The figure of the former is on the left of the group, kneeling in an attitude of adoration, clothed in a red mantle trimmed with grey fur, a blue bonnet lined with fur on his head; an order hangs over his shoulder, and a belt keeps in the folds of his dress. The features are similar to those of Hubert in the altar-piece of St. Bavon. The latter stands somewhat in rear on the extreme left in black dress and cap; and here, also, the features resemble those of John Van Eyck in the *Agnus Dei*, though the likeness is not so striking as that of Hubert. Opposite to them are closely huddled the despairing figures of the heresiarchs. The high priest, with the broken staff, turns his head from the revivifying fountain, his blindness being depicted by a handkerchief which shrouds his eyes; another priest is falling in consternation, whilst a third has taken to his heels, and another runs away with his hands to his ears; a fifth is observed tearing his breast, and the group expresses terror and despair, in contrast with the deep and solemn yet cheerful gravity of the princes of the Church.

For power of conception and distribution, no picture of the Flemish school approaches this, except the *Agnus Dei* of St. Bavon. It is the creation of a single hand, and the figures are all of similar stature, but of proportions less than those in the central panel of the *Agnus Dei*.

The Saviour in this altar-piece is a repetition of that of St. Bavon, with this exception, that the head resembles that of a Christ in the Gallery of Berlin. The choristers have the same round cast of head as



the female saints of the first *Agnus Dei*, and the general tone and reddish flesh tints recall to mind the greatest efforts of the master.<sup>1</sup>

Van Eyck was at this time in the best period of his life, married, in favour with a patron who trusted to his judgment in all matters of art, and full of work. Of his intercourse with Philip we get casual glimpses in 1434. The Duke and Duchess gave him orders,<sup>2</sup> and Philip was godfather to his daughter whom the Chamberlain de Charny held at the font;<sup>3</sup> yet his most important pictures were undertaken on private commission, chief of which is the panel at the National Gallery representing Arnolfini a draper of Bruges, and Jeanne de Chenany, his wife. There is a story in *Vaernewyk* and *Van Mander*, which tells how this

<sup>1</sup> Otto Mündler inclined to think that this picture was executed by a later master. Bürger (*Gazette des Beaux Arts* N. Ser. I. 1869. p. 10), was decidedly in favour of the authorship of John Van Eyck.

<sup>2</sup> "A Johannes Van Eyck que MdS. lui a donné pour composition à lui faictes pour plusieurs journées par lui vacquées par l'ordonnance et commandement de MdS. et de Madame la Duchesse, par les besongnes et affaires plus à plain contenues en sa quittance sur ce faite . . . . LCXXVI liv. Compte de Jehan Abonnel, du 1 Jan. 1433. (N. S. 1434) jusqu'au 31 Dec. 1434."—*De Laborde*, u. s. Vol. I. p. 399. Pinchart. Annot. CCVI.

<sup>3</sup> "A Jehan Peutin, orfèvre, demourant à Bruges, la somme de III<sup>xx</sup>XVI livres XII solz du pris de XL gros, monnoye de Flandres la livre, que deue luy étoit pour la vendue et délivrance de six tasses d'argent pesans ensemble XII marcs, du prix de VIII livres, I sol le marc, lesquelles MdS. a de lui fait prendre et achecter pour lui, de par icellui S. donner et présenter au baptisement de l'enfant Johannes van Eck, son peintre et varlet de chambre lequel il a fait tenir sur fons, en son nom, par le S. de Charny, pour ce comme plus à plain peut apparoir par mandement de MdS. sur ce fait et donné en sa ville de Bruxelles le derrenier jour de juing XXXIII<sup>ii</sup> quittance dudit Jehan Peutin et certification dudit S. de Charny sur les pris, achat et délivrance des dictes parties cy rendue III<sup>xx</sup>XVI. francs XII. sols.—Compte de Jehan Abonnel, de Janv. 1433, à Dec. 1434."—*De Laborde*, *Les Ducs de B.*, u. s. Vol. I. p. 341—2. Pinchart. Annot., u. s. CCIX.

picture was seen by Mary of Hungary and purchased of a barber for a place worth a hundred guilders a year;<sup>1</sup> but the truth is, it belonged to Margaret of Austria in 1516, had been given to her by Don Diego de Guevara; and was described in her inventories as representing "Arnout or Hernoult le Fin" with his wife,—a personage known on the testimony of contemporary records to have been a cloth merchant living at Bruges.<sup>2</sup>

This admirable and interesting piece represents the union of a man and woman dressed in state and holding each other's hand;<sup>3</sup> the lady wearing a wedding-

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s. p. 203. Vaernewyk. p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> In the Inventory of Margaret of Austria (1516), the picture is entered as follows: "Ung grant tableau qu'on appelle Hernoult le Fin, avec sa femme, dedens une chambre qui fut donné à Madame par Don Diego, les armes duquel sont en la couverte du dit tableau, fait du peintre Johannes." A later inventory (1524) contains the entry so: "133. Ung autre tableau fort exquis qui se clot à deux feulletz, ou il y a painttz un homme et une femme estants desboutz, touchantz la main l'ung de l'autre fait de la main de Johannes, les armes et devise de feu Don Dieghe esdits deux feulletz — nommé le personnaige, Arnoult."

In 1555, Mary of Hungary having succeeded to the regency of the Netherlands, this picture seems to have passed into her hands,—the panel already noticed being then catalogued as follows:—

"39. Una tabla grande, con dos puertas con que se cierra, y en ella un hombre é una muger que se toman las manos, con un espejo en que se muestran los dichos hombre é muger, y en las puertas las armas de Don Diego de Guevara; hecha por Juanes de Hec. Año 1434." Compare Le Glay and De Laborde, les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s. I. 24. See also De Laborde, u. s. I. 209, and Weale (Notes sur Jean Van Eyck, u. s. p. 28) for records of the merchant Arnolfini and his wife. Mr. Weale has omitted to state that the authors of these pages were the first to describe the portraits of the National Gallery as representing the Arnolfini.

<sup>3</sup> No. 186 of the Nat. Gal. Cat. This picture is inscribed on the wall above the mirror "Johannes de Eyck fuit hic. 1434," found and purchased by Major-General Hay, in lodgings at Brussels, after the battle of Waterloo, in 1815. 2 ft. 9 in. by 2 f. ½ inch. Wood.

ring half way up her finger, and attended by a terrier of wondrous workmanship. Harder outlines and clearer general tones distinguish this from the painter's previous works; yet in no single instance has John Van Eyck expressed with more perfection, by the aid of colour, the sense of depth and atmosphere; he nowhere blended colours more carefully, nowhere produced more transparent shadows. The carnation tints of the man's visage are more remarkable for these peculiar qualities than any previous ones. On the other hand, the draperies are angular in places; the movements of the figures want ease, and the hands, of the female figure especially, are small and awkward. These, however, are but slight faults; the finish of the parts is marvellous, and the preservation of the picture perfect; and there are few things more wonderful than the chandelier which hangs above the pair, the bed and chairs, the floor and pattens, or the concave looking-glass, in which the figures are reflected, round the frame of which ten circular scenes from the Passion of Christ are painted.

We should probably assign to this period a charmingly symmetrical and jewel-like picture in the collection of the Marquis of Exeter at Burleigh House, a small panel of most minute and finished treatment perfectly balanced in arrangement, in which the Virgin is shown standing with the Infant in her arms, blessing the kneeling figure of a monk introduced by St. Barbara.<sup>1</sup> The Virgin is dressed in the blue tunic and red mantle, usual to her,—the latter being edged with a simple line of gold; a diadem of pearls throws her hair backwards over her shoulders; a white drapery partly surrounds

<sup>1</sup> Burleigh House. Wood.  $8\frac{1}{4}$  inches by  $6\frac{1}{8}$ .

the Infant. The monk is uncowled and dressed in white, whilst St. Barbara, in a violet tunic, is covered completely by a warm, dark green cloak; her hair, also, is held back by a cincture of pearls, exposing her forehead and face. Pleasing as the grouping and arrangement of the figures undoubtedly is, features no less interesting and agreeable are noticed in the arrangement of the scene. Through a high arch which opens behind St. Barbara, the kneeling monk and his attendant saint appear to have entered. They pause in a high and broadly-lighted space, opening out into arcades, through which the eye wanders over space. Above these arcades are glass windows, in front of which a transparent dais hangs of a filmy texture, fringed with red and white. The ground, composed of squares of stone, inlaid with coloured ornaments, is flooded with light, like the figures and landscape. The Virgin is so placed as to have her person relieved upon the distance, which is one of the marvels of Van Eyck's brush. Seen through the central arch, and completing the perspective lines of the foreground, it exhibits a town composed of an incredible number of houses, contrasted with each other by judicious varieties of blue and red, according to the substance covering their painted walls and gables. The city fills an undulating plain, which swells into gentle eminences, and rises into distant hills clothed with vegetation. A central street and canal, with avenues of trees, under which several figures proceed, divides the city; a church stands at its extremity, and a drawbridge on the canal is occupied by figures which are reflected in the water, whilst a small boat is propelled beneath it: the stream meandering on till it is lost in the horizon, and completing the perspective illusion of the lines.

Through the opening to the left of St. Barbara, a landscape, similar in character to the last, is visible. It recedes from a foreground of strawberries to a middle distance, where, with a magnifying glass, we may see a square, a cross, numberless houses and shops with goods in them and innumerable figures; further on, a wall and a windmill;—the atmosphere is clear, the sky limpid and blue, filled with flights of birds, and enlivened by a couple of broken fleecy clouds. In all these details not one point obtrudes; and those who have seen the Paris Rollin altar-piece, with its miniature houses and figures, will be surprised to learn that greater detail is observed at Burleigh House on a panel of a quarter the size. Nor is this minuteness confined to the distance—it is also visible in the capitals of the columns which support the arches, where basreliefs and carvings of the richest contours are profusely introduced.

The picture is very remarkable for harmony of hues; the attitude of the Virgin and St. Barbara are as graceful as that of the kneeling monk is severe and noble; the female heads, elegant and pleasing as they are in form and expression, recall to mind the saints led by St. Barbara in the "Agnus Dei;" the monk is a splendid portrait, the head being fine in details and in mass. If the general tendency of John Van Eyck, in rendering the Divinity, be borne in mind, the type of the Child is strikingly soft, agreeable, and infantine; still in the square form of the body, and somewhat heavy gathers of the flesh, as well as in the leanness of the limbs, the thickness of the joints, and weight of the extremities, we trace the germ of those defects which are developed in larger representations of the same kind, during the later career of the



painter. Another remarkable feature is the shortness of the hands. This, as exhibited in the kneeling figure, may be derived from a desire to copy nature faithfully; but it is found in the Virgin and St. Barbara, and must, therefore, be marked as a curious departure from Van Eyck's ordinary rule. The outlines of all the parts are firm without being hard; and this quality extends to the draperies, which are free from angularity, and are marked by breadth of fold and elegance of form: rich and well balanced tints of dress enhance the other qualities of the picture. The flesh-tints are luminous and well relieved, and touched in with firmness and mastery.<sup>1</sup>

Companion to this work, if not in subject, at least in size and execution, is the Madonna of the Dresden Gallery. The Virgin Mary sits enthroned in a golden chair in a most graceful attitude, supporting on her knee the naked Infant Saviour, who struggles in her grasp, and holds in his right hand a white scroll. The Virgin's light hair is thrown back behind her ears by a cincture of pearls, and her mild face, high forehead, and contented eyes and mouth, are expressive of maternal joy. Her deep blue dress, bordered with a profusion of jewels, leaves a nicely modelled throat exposed; and

<sup>1</sup> It is supposed, at Burleigh House, that this picture was painted for the Abbot of St. Martin at Ypres. The fact is so stated, in the Flemish language, on the back of the panel. There is but one picture described in the earliest authors as being painted for St. Martin, at Ypres—a large triptych, in which the Abbot of Mælbeke kneels before the Virgin and Child. He is dressed in a cope and stole, embroidered, and edged with a band containing the twelve Apostles; he is not supported by St. Barbara; on the wings are four scriptural subjects. The panel of the Marquis of Exeter corresponds neither in size nor in subject with that which John Van Eyck is said to have painted for the Abbot of St. Martin, at Ypres.

the wide sleeves and the broad red mantle are both adorned with a rich border of gold embroidery and pearls. The Saviour, who sits on a little white cloth, has a laughing face and light curly hair as in the Ince Madonna; his naked form is pleasing to the eye, though not without the faults of heavy extremities and gathers of flesh noticeable at Burleigh House. The hands of the Virgin, which hold the Infant under the arms, are elegant and long fingered; the Virgin's feet, concealed by the long drapery of her mantle, rest on a raised floor, which is covered by a rich Turkish carpet spreading beyond it over an inlaid floor. Behind the group the rich black and green tapestry of a dais, is suspended by cords to the walls of the church, in which the throne stands. The figure of the Virgin is relieved in half tint by a light beautiful structure of round arches, supported by variegated marble columns having richly carved capitals, on the entablature of which little pointed niches rise containing statuettes of saints. Nothing can exceed the delicate lightness of this part of the picture or the perfection of these miniature accessories. Behind the dais the round eyed windows of the 15th century are visible. In the wings which represent the side aisles of the church are St. Michael on the left, supporting the kneeling figure of the patron, and St. Catherine on the right. St. Michael is in armour of gold embossed with precious stones; he carries on his left arm his shield and helmet, and whilst calling attention with his right to the patron, he rests the lance within the compass of his arm. His wings are of green and blue; his youthful face adorned with long curly hair; a shirt of mail is visible at the neck and below the hips; and the under dress of blue, cut into parallelograms and embroidered with

gold and stars, appears at his shoulders and above the knee. The patron is a man past the middle age, wearing a black wig like that of Chancellor Rollin; he holds up both hands in religious wonder, and is clad in a deep green coat with a high collar lined with brown fur. The face of St. Michael<sup>1</sup> is feminine, the nose rather long, the eyes small; the long hair gives it a quaint and antiquated appearance as would a wig. The attitude of the Saint is not ungraceful, and the right leg encased in armour is admirably drawn. The standing figure of St. Catherine is remarkable for the protrusion of the body, this effect being increased by the mass of blue drapery brought together in front. The Saint has a beautiful face adorned with a quantity of golden hair; and a gorgeous openworked crown betokens her regal birth. In her right hand she holds the sword which rests on the ground; in her left an open book; her dress is of ermine, with white lappets of the same, falling over her arms; her neck and throat are bare; at her feet lies the wheel. This picture is painted with a profusion of colour, is perfectly harmonious, and shows no trace of the hand; it is luminous and clear, both in the figures and accessories; the draperies are simple and flowing; through a window behind St. Catherine is one of Van Eyck's marvellous miniature landscapes.

The outer side of the wings of this little altarpiece are filled with a monochrome of the Annunciation. On an octagonal pedestal to the left the angel stands holding a double cross in his left hand, with the other he makes the customary gesture, accompanying it with a laughing expression of face. On a

<sup>1</sup> No. 1713. Dresden Gal. Wood 1 f. 2 in. by 2 f., retouched in the Virgin's face and mantle.

similar pedestal to the right is the Virgin, holding with her left hand the folds of her dress which project in front; her right hand is held up in wonder; her head is turned upwards, and she looks at the dove of the Holy Ghost flying down towards her. The draperies of these statuesque imitations are excessively angular and stiff.

The Duke of Burgundy, during the latter end of 1434, was again on a progress through his dominions, and his treasurers, as they had once done before, took occasion to stop John Van Eyck's salary. This so displeased the Duke, who was then at Dijon, that he wrote a letter of reprimand to his stewards at Lille, pointing out to them that their proceeding was calculated to drive from his service a man whose like was not then to be found, and for whom he had commissions in prospect that no one else could carry out.<sup>1</sup> Philip wanted Van Eyck apparently for several purposes. He was at this time meditating a breach with England; and in 1435 had taken steps to realize his purpose by summoning a general congress at Arras. To this congress he called French and English envoys, legates from the pope and representatives from the Emperor of Germany, from Spain, Italy, Denmark, and Poland, and from the towns of France and Belgium. At this very moment John Van Eyck was taken from his easel by the Duke and sent upon "distant journeys to foreign places (*estranges marches*)<sup>2</sup> for certain secret matters

<sup>1</sup> De Laborde, *Les Ducs etc*<sup>a</sup>. I. Introduction, p. LIII, and Pinchart *Annot.*, u. s. CCV.

<sup>2</sup> "A Johannes Deick varlet de chambre et peintre de MdS. pour aller en certains voiaiges loingtains et estranges marches ou MdS. l'a envoyé pour aucunes matières secrètes, dont il ne veult autre déclaration estre faicte: VI<sup>c</sup> philippus (sic.) valent VII<sup>c</sup>XX fr. . . ." In other ink, "Seulement III<sup>c</sup>LX livres. Super ipm Johēm Deick ad compon<sup>d</sup>. dont il rend cy quittance de

of which no further declaration need be made." The expenses of this mission are given in the accounts at 720 fr.; and the largeness of this sum may be understood by comparison with the expenses attending an ordinary journey;—the cost of travelling from Brussels to Paris being in those days 19 francs. The custom of the time was to employ persons of subordinate station in important negotiations; we may therefore presume that John Van Eyck had a confidential mission to Arras during the summer and autumn of 1435. It is remarkable further that no pictures of this year's date have been preserved, whilst in the following year, numerous portraits and votive altar-pieces were produced. Of these the Madonna with St. Donatian, George de Pala, and his patron saint in the Academy of Bruges is a curious instance of the painter's occasional descent to a lower level of treatment than that observable in the common run of the works of the time. This panel was commissioned for the high altar of the Church of St. Donatian at Bruges;<sup>1</sup> cleaning and retouching impair its value and beauty; but, apart from this, the colour is not handled with the painter's habitual breadth, and traces of manipulation obtrude in all parts. The figures are drawn with less than usual ability; most of the faces are insipid in expression, and the hands are stiff and long; tints no

III<sup>c</sup>LX fr. seulement et le surplus montant à semblable somme de III<sup>c</sup>LX fr. rayé pour deffaut de quittance. Compte de Jehan Abonnel du 1<sup>er</sup> Jan. 1435 (1436 n. s.) au 31 Dec. 1436."—*De Laborde, u. s.* Vol. I. p. 350. Pinchart. Annot. CCX.

<sup>1</sup> Bruges Acad. No. 1. Wood. M. 1. 22 h. by 1. 57. with inscriptions round the framing, and the following in the lower edge of the same: "Hoc op̃ fecit fieri mag̃ Georgi de Pala huī ecclesie canonī p̃ Johannē de eyck pictorē. Et fundavit hic duas capellias de igno(?) chori domini M<sup>o</sup>. CCCXXXIII<sup>o</sup> t9pt. (? completum) añ 1436." A copy of this picture is No. 412 in the Antwerp Museum. See also le Beffroi. Tom. II. p. 28.



longer melt into each other, and the colour, instead of being rich and giving to the flesh a plump and pleasant aspect, has a hard and red appearance. The form of the Virgin is the most displeasing of any that Van Eyck ever painted, and the child exhibits the usual peculiarities of shortness and thinness, with features in which the master, seeking to express the Holy Spirit, only succeeded in depicting age, incompatible with the smallness of the Infant's size and the feebleness of its proportions. St. Donatian is the most remarkable of the persons in the composition; his pious and noble head rivets the spectator's attention and keeps it from the overloaded ornaments of a splendid cope and stole; but the figure of St. George is trivial and awkward. The background is well preserved, but the draperies are partially destroyed.

The portrait of Jan de Leeuw, at Vienna, finished, like the last, in 1436, is of a red tone similar to that which renders the Virgin of St. Donatian unpleasant to the eye.<sup>1</sup>

Another portrait,<sup>2</sup> described at Vienna as that of "Jodocus Vydt, at an advanced age, bareheaded, in a red dress turned up with white," does not display the little grey eyes, the nose, or the expression of that person; but it has the vigorous tone of colouring, and the decision of outline which are perceptible in the portrait of the National Gallery. The original beautiful

<sup>1</sup> No. 13. Second floor, second room, Gallery of Belvedere, at Vienna. This panel is signed on a salient border, "Jan de Leeuw (Leeuw figured by a drawing of a lion) op Sant Orselen Daen dat claer eerst met oghen saen 1401. Gheconterfeit nu heeft mi Jan Van Eyck wel blijct wanneert begā 1436." 1 f. h. by 10 inches. l., Austrian measure, much injured in the face by cleaning.

<sup>2</sup> No. 42. Second floor, second room, Belvedere Gallery. Wood. 1 f. 1 h. by 0 f. 11, Austrian measure.

design may be seen in the collection of drawings at Dresden.

There are no records of John having been employed in confidential missions by the Duke of Burgundy after 1435; but he continued to be official painter, and produced many pictures,—amongst them a St. Barbara, now at Antwerp (unfinished), in 1437, a head of the Saviour, not a very good example of his manner, now at Berlin, in 1438, a portrait of his wife excessively careful and delicate, and a small Madonna in 1439, besides numerous other pieces unauthenticated by dates or signatures, which are now to be seen in various galleries.

St. Barbara is represented sitting on the ground, and pensively turning the leaves of a book. In her right hand she holds a palm. Her ample robe lies in broken folds about her; in the background is the tower, her emblem, a conspicuous landmark in a landscape of hills dotted with trees. The sky is coloured, the rest of the picture merely indicated by minute contour, showing how careful the master was to leave nothing to chance.<sup>1</sup>

It was the custom of early painters, as Mr. Didron proves by numerous examples,<sup>2</sup> to represent the figure of the Eternal under the younger features of the Saviour. There is some difficulty according to more than

<sup>1</sup> Antwerp Mus. No. 410. This picture is signed "Johēs de Eyck me fecit 1437", and is probably that described by Van Mander, u. s. 203, as in possession of Lucas de Heere. It belonged to the well-known printers Enschedé, of Harlem, who had an engraving made of it in 1769. In 1786 they sold it to a dealer named P. Yver, who sold it again to Mr. Ploos Van Amstel, in whose collection it remained for a long time. Sold from thence into the hands of a Mr. Oyen, the widow of that gentleman parted with it to the Antwerp Collection. M. 0.32 by 0.19. There is a drawing of this picture in the Museum of Lille.

<sup>2</sup> *Iconologie chrétienne.*

one critic in ascertaining whether Hubert meant to represent God the Father or the Saviour in the altarpiece of the *Agnus Dei*; but the head of our Saviour, painted by John Van Eyck, in 1438, tends to show that the features of the Redeemer were meant to be depicted at St. Bavon; for in both the same solemnity and age are given, the same attempt is made to render the spiritual idea by rigidity of gaze and immobility of expression. John, however, in attempting a subject far above his strength, is less successful even than his brother, and fails to impart the noble bearing and solemnity which mark the figure in the *Agnus Dei*.<sup>1</sup>

John Van Eyck's portrait of his wife is a far more pleasing picture, though by no means a flattering likeness. He completed it in 1439; and it may be cited as an instance of the painter's talent for finish and minuteness in ornaments; the hand being, perhaps, the most complete and perfect one he ever executed. Much of the disagreeable impression of this portrait is owing to want of grace in the costume, the forehead being stripped of hair and disfigured by two small horns near the temples.<sup>2</sup> A *Virgin and Child*, of the same period, at Antwerp may be noticed for the red and opaque quality of tone already observed elsewhere. The energies of Van Eyck were declining when he made the forms of the infant Christ so puny; nor can the draperies be praised for their flow, nor the outlines

<sup>1</sup> No. 528, of Berlin Catalogue. Signed, "Johês de Eyck, me fecit et appleviit anno 1438, 31 Januarii." Wood, 1 foot 7½ i. by 1 foot 3 i., Prussian measure, from the Solly Collection.

<sup>2</sup> No. 2, of Bruges Academy. Wood. M. 0. 32 h. by 0. 26. Signed, "Cojux m̃s Johês me aplevit anno 1439, m. Junii." "Etas mea triginta triũ aňorũ. Als ikh kan." Given to the Academy in 1808, by M. Pierre Van Lede, and formerly in the painter's chapel in the Noorzand Stræt, now the chapel of the convent of the Liguorist sisterhood.

for aught but hardness and rigidity. Finish and minuteness characterise the panel in a marked manner but its chief feature of interest is distinct from the appreciation of its execution.<sup>1</sup> In it we find the only point of contact between the schools of Bruges and Cologne. In Hubert Van Eyck it was impossible to trace the contact; but this Virgin and Child seems inspired by a larger picture at Cologne, painted, it is believed, by the celebrated Wilhelm, of more than life-size, and with a nature and nobleness of expression, a tenderness of feeling, which even John Van Eyck was not successful in imparting. Feeling and grace are peculiarly a feature of Wilhelm and his school; and when the time comes for tracing the influence which his teaching exercised, and his pupils afterwards received by mingling with the Flemings, the qualities and faults which mark his manner may be more particularly dwelt on. The picture of Cologne represents the Virgin standing in a niche, and holding to her breast the infant Christ, whom she affectionately presses, leaning her head forward to it with much benignity.<sup>2</sup> Not only has John Van Eyck taken his inspiration from this composition, but he sought, without success, to give the draperies that easy, simple flow, which characterises Wilhelm. The same may be said of another panel, the "Virgin of Lucca" now in the Stædel

<sup>1</sup> No. 411, of Antwerp Catalogue. Signed, "Johês de Eyck me fecit, aplevit anno 1439." Bought by M. V. Ertborn, in 1838, of the curate of Dickelvenne, in East-Flanders. Wood. M. 0. 19 h. by 0. 12. This picture answers to the description of the following, in the inventory of Margaret of Austria's collection, at Malines, in 1524. "Un petit tableau de Nostre Dame tenant son enfant lequel tient un petit paternostre de coral en sa main, forte antique, ayant une fontaine auprès elle et deux anges tenants aux drapt d'or figuré derrière elle."—*De Laborde, u. s.*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> In the Seminary at Cologne.

Gallery, at Frankfort.<sup>1</sup> Here, however, the figure is seated beneath a dais, instead of standing; but the treatment and feeling are of the same period as that of the Antwerp picture.

An authentic piece by John Van Eyck is in the collection of the Rothschild family in Paris. The Virgin, erect under a richly embroidered canopy, holds in her arms the Infant Jesus, who is blessing a Dominican kneeling before him; a female saint attends, and a nun holds the Virgin's crown; a distant landscape representing a town, a river, and a bridge, is seen through the aisles.<sup>2</sup>

Another authentic picture by John Van Eyck, some years ago the property of a gentleman at Antwerp, represents the Holy Women at the Sepulchre with three soldiers in armour asleep at the foot of the tomb, and angels announcing the Resurrection; the numerous details of armour are given with extreme care, the landscape is very attractive.<sup>3</sup>

In the Hermitage at St. Petersburg we have an Annunciation by John Van Eyck, in which the Virgin appears on her knees at a desk in a mansion richly decorated with pillars and carvings. The Holy Ghost descends towards her, whilst to the left the angel kneels with the lily and a scroll in his hands. Though not of the master's best, this genuine work is full of interest on account of the finish and variety of its accessories.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Frankfort. Städel. No. 64. This picture is from the collection of the late King of Holland, where it was sold for 3000 florins. It is called the Virgin of Lucca, having been of old in the gallery of the Duke of Lucca. Wood. 1 f. 11½ h. by 1 f. 5½.

<sup>2</sup> Paris. Rothschild Collection. Wood. 1 f. by 1 f. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Wood. 2½ f. by 1½.

<sup>4</sup> St. Petersburg. Hermitage. No. 443. Wood. 2 f. 9 h. by 1 f. 0¾; painted, according to an unconfirmed tradition, for



Amongst the pictures attributed to John Van Eyck is one, belonging to Mr. Hope in London, representing the Virgin enthroned in a niche and holding in her arms the infant Saviour. Above the Virgin's head is a canopy supported by carved pilasters adorned with small statuettes; on a band which runs across the niche from the summit of the pilasters these words are inscribed:

*Domus, dei, est, et porta cœli.*

on the pedestal below the Virgin's feet the words:

*Ipsam est quam preparavit Domus filio divi mei.*

The composition and attitude of the Virgin and Saviour correspond exactly with those of a Madonna already described in the Antwerp Gallery, with the exception of a fountain and two angels holding the draperies of the canopy. Here the background is architecture. Many defects may be enumerated in this picture besides those usually found in John Van Eyck's masterpieces. The colour of the various parts, instead of being rich and softened by ærial perspective, is thin and cold, grey in shadow, and wholly without glazing; the handling is mechanical; the forms of the Virgin and Infant are feeble, a fault not uncommon in Van Eyck, but generally relieved by some beauty of colour. If this were really by Van Eyck, it might be truly called one of his poorest productions.<sup>1</sup>

Philip the good to be placed in a building at Dijon. Sold at Dijon in 1819 to the king of Holland, and bought for the Hermitage for 5,375 florins (about £ 537. 10.), originally in the Van Hal Collection at Antwerp. (Private note from M. Weale.)

<sup>1</sup> London. Mr. Beresford Hope. Wood. 1 f. 10 h. by 0.11½. This also formed part of the king of Holland's Collection, where it was bought for 600 florins. Compare Waagen (in *Zeitschrift für b. Kunst.* 1868. III. 127), who pleads for the genuineness of this work.

Of doubtful genuineness again we should cite Mr. Suermondt's *Virgin and Child* before a background of very carefully painted roses, oranges, and cypresses, with a fountain at one side. The characteristic ugliness of the Virgin's face and Infant's form as surely points to the hand of a disciple, as the broken character of the drapery, the toneless colour, and false perspective.<sup>1</sup>

Suggestive of doubt in another form is Mr Suermondt's *Virgin*, erect with the Child in her arms in a church, a small panel of which there are many replicas or imitations.<sup>2</sup> In the door of the choir screen behind the Virgin two angels sing from a book. There is a reminiscence of Van Eyck in the type of the heads, and something to recall memories of the Madonna of Dresden, but that the tones are less silvery and the impast is heavier. The sun, which bursts through the panes of a high pointed window, throws crisp lights on the slants and thence through the door of a chapel into the gloom of the church itself. The way in which the effect is brought out reminds us of the later Dutch, and brings up the question—Is not this a skilful copy by a master like de Hooch? Yet the present appearance of the picture, and its fat impast, may be due to a clever modern restorer.

If we believe Vasari and Van Mander, John Van Eyck was visited in his later years at Bruges by An-

<sup>1</sup> Aix la Chapelle. Suermondt coll., bought at Florence by O. Müндler. Wood. M. 0. 59 h. by 0. 43. Yet compare H. G. Hotho's and Waagen's contrary opinions in *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* for 1867 and 1868. II. 103—7. and III. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Same coll. Wood. M. 0. 31 h. by 0. 15, once in possession of a gentleman at Nantes. (De Laborde, *Les Ducs de B.*, u s. Introduction Vol. I. p. 50. One imitation of a comparatively modern character will be noticed in Memling. (Antwerp Museum. Nos. 255 and 256). Another is part of a diptych in the Doria palace at Rome. Grand Gallery, Braccio III. No. 38.

tonello da Messina, to whom he taught the secrets of oil medium.<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to say more of this alleged intercourse, than that it is highly improbable, and not historically proved.

The last days of the master are said to have been spent at Ypres, where he is supposed to have left unfinished an altar-piece commissioned by the abbot of the monastery of St. Martin. According to Vaernewyk this picture was a triptych representing the abbot on his knees before the Virgin and Child, with unfinished compositions of the burning bush, Gideon's fleece, Ezekiel's gate, and Aaron's rod on the shutters. It is a curious circumstance that a picture for a long time preserved in Flemish collections answers to this description, yet proves to be from another hand than that of John Van Eyck.<sup>2</sup>

Tradition, which is not always to be rejected when unconfirmed by evidence, assigns to the younger Van Eyck certain discoveries in glass painting. Le Vieil, in his "*Peinture sur Verre*,"<sup>3</sup> says that John found the secret of enamelling on glass, and taught the method

<sup>1</sup> Vasari. IV. 76. Van Mander, u. s. 202.

<sup>2</sup> See Van Mander, u. s. 202, and Værnewyk, u. s. 133. See also *Annales d'Ypres*.—*Accounts of the Grey friars in de Bast*, u. s. "Anno 1445 (? a clerical error) heeft Meester Johannes Van Eycken, eene befaemden schilder, binnen Yper geschildert dat over treffelick tafereel, t'welcke gestelt wiert in den choor van St. Mærtens, tot een gedachtenis van deen eerwaardigen heere n. m. v. Mælbecke, abt ofte Proost v. S. Mært." Dan dat men slechts noch eene in Brugghe mach anschouwen, en eene t'Iper noch die doch voldaan is niet. L. de Heere, Ode in Van Mander, p. 126. The picture was in the collection of Mr. Dumortier at Bruges and in that of Mr. Van der Schrieck at Louvain, and was sold in 1861 to Mr. Schollært. (Ruelens. Notes et Additions, u. s. CIV—CXIII.) Waagen's theory that it is probably by Lambert Van Eyck cannot hold. (*Handbook of Painting*. 8<sup>o</sup>. London, 1860. p. 73.)

<sup>3</sup> *Le Vieil. Die Kunst auf Glas*. Nürnberg, 1779. 4<sup>o</sup>. pp. 64—70 mentions this, but omits to give an authority.

of abrading the tinted surface of coated crystal. By this invention a clear substratum was obtained, where it was desirable to get white or yellow points, surrounded by other colours without leading in a piece of white. This process was of the utmost value, as it obviated the necessity of numerous leaden joints, but it is much contested whether Van Eyck was the person who applied it. The practice of abrading certainly dates as far back as the beginning of the 15th century.

It has also been stated that Van Eyck invented perspective in the Netherlands. Landscapes, it is true, were always a feature in the productions of John Van Eyck, and they have been admired at all times for their faithfulness to nature and their play of atmosphere. This quality, depending on the innate sentiment and perception of tone more than on mathematical deductions, certainly forms one of the charms of John Van Eyck's pictures. But great as these charms are, they do not entitle the possessor to the name of a discoverer. That Van Eyck did not possess completely the rules of linear perspective, is evident from the examination of his figures, which are remarkable for vivid harmonies rather than for correctness of foreshortenings or true balance of light and shade. The rules of chiaroscuro were better known to Paolo Uccelli, who produced by lines the effects which Van Eyck obtained by colour.<sup>1</sup> Uccelli went so far as to

<sup>1</sup> An example of the progress which perspective had made in Italy, during the lifetime of John Van Eyck, is the interesting book of drawings of Jacopo Bellini, the father of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, now in the British Museum. It is of this work that Mr. Von Rumohr says, in a letter annexed to the volume, "that Jacopo notably promoted perspective, being among the first of those who sought to carry out the system in naked figures." Jacopo Bellini, we need scarcely remark, was a contemporary of John Van Eyck.

foreshorten figures by scientific means;<sup>1</sup> John van Eyck in the copy of nature and its minutiae produced perspective views of which the colour is the chief illusion. His lines, though true in landscape backgrounds, were defective in the figures of the foreground; thus rendering the latter subservient to the former. There is not an instance of Van Eyck producing foreshortened figures, true to the rules of perspective; but his great sagacity and talent enabled him to reproduce atmospheric effects, as much, perhaps, from a faithful and minute observation of nature as from science. His works were, in all likelihood, not the result of his possessing linear perspective reduced to a demonstrative art; and this view is confirmed by the productions of his pupils, who, after his death, ceased to progress in that very branch of the art—one of the facts to which we may attribute the immediate decline of the Flemish school. To the progress of perspective as a demonstrative art, on the contrary, is, in a great measure, owing the rise of the Italian schools. The first attempts in that direction were made by Orcagna and others. Next came Paolo Uccelli, the contemporary of Van Eyck;<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Vasari admired, amongst other things remarkable for their perspective in Uccelli's pictures of Santa Maria Novella, at Florence, a figure of the Eternal, which he describes in these words: "This figure," he says, "is the most difficult of any that Paolo Uccelli executed, because it is represented flying towards the wall, and with the head foreshortened, and has such vigour that the figure by its relief presses through and divides it."

<sup>2</sup> In Paolo Uccelli we find examples the very reverse of those afforded by John Van Eyck. Uccelli's works are mostly executed in one single colour, a sort of *chiaro-scuro*, made of *terra verde*. When he attempted to colour them he failed, or succeeded but imperfectly. Paolo lacked the sense and perception of colour, and obtained effect in his paintings by reducing his lines to the test of perspective rules, and by the gradations of light and shade; that is, *chiaro-scuro*. To this Vasari himself bears testimony, whilst those parts of Uccelli's works



the system was then worked out by Piero della Francesca, Donatello, Mantegna, and others, and reduced to a compendious form by Luca Pacioli and Leonardo da Vinci. By following these, the Italians progressed and became great, whilst the Flemings, being inattentive or careless of them, retrograded.

Of works remaining to be mentioned we may throw together the following notes:—

Dr. Waagen has attributed to John Van Eyck the Virgin and Child of the Doria Gallery, known there under the name of Duerer, but the picture is of the 16th century.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Waagen also assigned to Van Eyck two portraits, male and female, in the gallery of Count Demidoff, which were sold in Paris (1870) under the name of Dierick Bouts.<sup>2</sup> He describes a Marriage of St. Catherine, in possession of a picture-dealer,

which remain in the convent of S. Maria Novella are a proof of it. Vasari lauds the perspective science of the painter, affirming that previous to his time perspective "was made by chance;" but he criticises Paolo's colour, saying "that he made his fields blue, his cities red, and the buildings various, as best suited his fancy; wherein he committed an error; for," adds Vasari, "whatever we intend to be stone cannot and should not be tinted of other colours." Vasari goes further, however. He expresses his meaning still more distinctly when he writes that, "by due arrangement and proportion of lines, the level space, which really is small, and closely bounded, may be made to appear extensive, and acquire the semblance of distance; and he who, after securing this, shall be capable of judiciously distributing his lights and shadows in their proper places with colours, will, doubtless, produce the effect of a more complete illusion to the eyes, cause his pictures to have greater relief, and give them a more exact resemblance to life and reality." We therefore find in Paolo Uccelli and John Van Eyck, severally, the qualities which, united, give pictures the complete appearance of life and rotundity: in Paolo, relief without colour; and in Van Eyck, colour with insufficient relief. We agree with Vasari, in thinking the latter the master and founder of the modern mode of colouring, and superior therein to all his contemporaries; but we join, at the same time, in the praise he awards to the former as the great promoter of perspective reduced to a scientific and demonstrative art.

<sup>1</sup> No. 17. Doria Gallery, Rome.

<sup>2</sup> They were bought in 1845 in Italy.

M. Weber of Antwerp, signed "Joanes Van Eyck." Opposite St. Catherine, who holds a sword, is another female saint and St. Ursula. M. Verhelst's collection at Ghent contains a large-sized copy of the same picture.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Waagen, after describing the Annunciation by J. Van Eyck, now at St. Petersburg, notices a copy of it in the house of M. Joly de Bammerville in Paris.<sup>2</sup> The second of these pieces was sold at the death of M. de Bammerville, in 1854, and bought by M. Nieuwenhuys. It has all the character of a genuine Van Eyck.<sup>3</sup> Another picture, which the authors of this volume have not seen, is the St. Francis belonging to Lord Heytesbury (Wiltshire), said to have been painted in Portugal in 1428—9.

The sacerdotal ornaments made by order of Philip the Good, for the Chapter of the Golden Fleece, are now preserved at Vienna; and they are described as being adorned with many figures drawn from the cartoons of John Van Eyck.<sup>4</sup>

An impression seems to exist in some quarters that Van Eyck incurred the displeasure of his most exalted patron, and died after having been stripped of his title in the Burgundian service.<sup>5</sup> There is no reason why this impression should prevail. In the very last entry of the ducal accounts which has been preserved—a payment for a miniature in 1439—John Van Eyck is still called "paintre de monseigneur."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> With four additional figures of saints. This was formerly in the chapel of a brotherhood in St. Donatian at Bruges (Note of Mr. Weale.)

<sup>2</sup> Bought at Rome in 1841 (Note of Mr. Weale.)

<sup>3</sup> Wood, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. by 8.

<sup>4</sup> See Dr. Waagen, *Kunstblatt*, 1847, Aug. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Kervyn de Lettenhove. *Journal des Beaux Arts*. No. 1, and Weale. *Catalogue du Musée de Bruges*, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> 1438—39. *Compte troisième de Jehan de Visen pour ung an entier, du 1er Janvier MCCCCXXXVIII (1439, n. s.) au XXXI decembre MCCCCXXXIX. 1234. A Johannes van Eicke paintre de monseigneur, qu'il avait payé à ung enlumineur de Bruges pour avoir enluminé certain livre pour mondit seigneur ou il y a II<sup>e</sup>LXXXII grosses lettres et XII petites. VI francs, VI sols, VI d. De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s. I. 358.*

John Van Eyck's death took place at Bruges, in 1440-41, some say, indeed, on the 9th of July 1440;<sup>1</sup> and it appears, from the registers of the chapter, that he was buried in the cemetery outside the church of St. Donatian; that his funeral cost the large sum of 12 livres parisis; that the ringing of the bells in his honour cost 24 sols parisis; and that on the 21st of March, 1441 (1442 n. s.), his body was moved out of the cemetery into the church itself, at the request of his brother Lambert, and placed in a vault near the font.<sup>2</sup> His will was proved in 1442.<sup>3</sup>

Facio relates that a triptych preserved in the palace of Alphonso of Arragon represented the Annunciation, with St. John the Baptist and St. Jerom on each wing, whilst on the outer side were portraits of the donor,

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Weale's not quite convincing statements and documents in this respect in "Notes sur Jean Van Eyck." pp. 15—19.

<sup>2</sup> "Computatio Johannis civis, canonici, de bonis fabrice ecclesie beati Donatiani Brugensis, anni 1440, facta capitulo, anno 1441.

Receptum ex sepulturis mortuorum, et redemptione funeralium.

Item.—Pro sepulture magistri Johannis Eyck pictoris XII lib. par.

Receptum ex campanis mortuorum.

Item.—Ex campana magistri Johannis Eyck pictoris XXIII sol par."

Extract from the Acts Capitular of St. Donat of Bruges. *C. Carton, u. s., pp. 274—5.*

"Eadem die (21 Martii, 1441, or n. s. 1442) ad preces Lamberti fratris quondam Jo. de Eyck, solempnissimi pictoris domini mei, concesserunt quod corpus ipsius, quod jam sepultum in ecclesie ambitu, transferatur, de licentiâ episcopi, et ponatur in ecclesia juxta fontes salvo jure anniversarii et fabrice."

In the margin are these words:—"Concessio sepulturæ Johanni pictori."—*Carton, u. s., p. 287.*

<sup>3</sup> Same accounts. 1442. "Ex testamento, Johannis Eyck pictoris XLVIII sol par." *Carton, u. s. 176—7.*

Baptista Lomellinus, and his wife.<sup>1</sup> Of this triptych no trace remains. Sansovino describes an altarpiece in the church of Santa Maria de' Servi at Venice, containing the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi, of which nothing further is known.<sup>2</sup>

From an entry in the inventory of Margaret of Austria's collection we become acquainted with two panels by "Maistre Jehan" the painter, one of which is the Virgin, and the other Monseigneur de Ligne.<sup>3</sup> None of these works are at present discoverable.

Notwithstanding the small demand for pictures representing other than sacred subjects, in the fourteenth century, and necessary as it seemed for artists, to vary the scenes from Holy Writ or legendary history, which served to ornament the churches or the palaces of the clergy and the nobles, they deigned at times to paint profane compositions, productions of which kind met with most success in Italy. Frederic of Urbino, the first and only duke<sup>4</sup> of that name, adorned a bathroom with them.<sup>5</sup> Ottaviano degli Ottaviani, a luxurious cardinal, likewise had some compositions of this kind, in which women of splendid form were seen emerging from a bath, slightly veiled to hide their sex;—an old woman perspiring in a corner of the room, which showed that

<sup>1</sup> Facio. (Bart.), u. s. p. 46. "There can be little doubt that this (picture) was the work which Antonello da Messina saw." Eastlake, u. s., note to p. 208.

The name of Lomellino is historical at Genoa in the 15th century. Carlo Lomellino was sent 1433, with 10 large ships, to Balaclava by the Genoese to defend the fort there from the attacks of the Tartars. The khan, however, obtained the upper hand and the Genoese only preserved their colonies by paying tribute. *Arch. Storic. d'Italia. Vol. V. N. Seria. pp. 1–24. Art. Il Mar Nero.*

<sup>2</sup> Sansovino (Descrizione di Venezia) Ven. 1580, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> De Laborde, u. s., p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Vasari, u. s., vol. I. p. 163.

<sup>5</sup> Facio, u. s., p. 46.

the bath was hot; a dog lapping water in a distant landscape; and the never failing mirror. Other pieces of this sort were to be found in various towns of Italy at the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the gallery of Nicolo Lampognano, at Milan, was exhibited "The Patron and his Agent," half lengths;<sup>1</sup> and in the house of Leònico Tomeo, "filosofo," an Otter-Hunt, on canvas, one foot high, with various figures in a landscape.<sup>2</sup> The most curious of these performances must, however, have been that produced by John Van Eyck for Philip the Good, representing "the world in its spherical shape, pointing out accurately distant sites and places."<sup>3</sup>

Amongst the pictures which bear the name of John Van Eyck in the catalogues of public and private collections, it is but natural that many should be falsely ascribed to that painter. The Madonna at Santa Barbara in Castel Nuovo, Naples, assigned by some authors to Van Eyck, by others to Donzelli, and supposed to contain portraits of Alphonso of Arragon and his son, is a production of the 16th century. It may seem a bold assertion to declare, that the Munich Gallery contains no genuine Van Eyck; still more so to say that panels, with the signature and date complete, are false, and only forgeries; yet such, undoubtedly, is the case.

In 1788 a gentleman named Busscher presented to the Bruges Academy a "Head of Christ," apparently a reduced fac-simile of that which John Van Eyck pro-

<sup>1</sup> Notizie d'opere di disegno nella prima metà del secolo XVI. scritte da un Anonimo.—Ed. J. Morelli. 8vo. Bassano, 1800, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Anonimo, u. s., p. 14. If this picture was authentic, it is Van Eyck's only production on canvas.

<sup>3</sup> Facio, u. s., p. 46.



duced in 1438, authenticated, as it seemed, by the signature and mark of Van Eyck himself. This head is devoid of all that characterises the master, being a superficial imitation—a cold, hard, and lifeless mask, painted without art, and without the broad impasto or the skilful glazings of an original; yet being certified by an apparently authentic signature, the only question with the critics was, whether 1440 or 1420 was the real date; those who argued for the latter expressing their firm belief that this must be the very head of Christ which John exhibited at Antwerp, to the astonishment and pleasure of the artist corporation.<sup>1</sup> The signature and date, however, are more suspicious than the panel itself; “Johês de Eyck, inventor, anno 1440, 30 January,” being, at least, unusual. It can scarcely be conceived, indeed, why, for the first time, at fifty-nine, John Van Eyck should write himself “inventor,” when the fame of his discoveries and talents had gone the round of every country on the continent, still less that he should paint a head so little in his own manner when he produced the splendid portrait of his wife. In spite, therefore, of the signature, the genuineness of this picture must be denied.<sup>2</sup>

The panels once called Van Eycks in the Pinakothek of Munich will be described elsewhere. St. Luke painting the portrait of the Virgin,<sup>3</sup> and the Adoration of the Magi, with wings which represent the Annunciation and the Presentation in the Temple,<sup>4</sup> will be classed amongst the fine productions of Van der Weyden. The

<sup>1</sup> An apocryphal anecdote as before stated.

<sup>2</sup> No. 3, Cat. of Bruges.

<sup>3</sup> No. 42, Cab. III. Munich Catalogue.

<sup>4</sup> No. 35, 36, 37, Cab. III. Munich Catalogue.

"Offerings of the Magi,"<sup>1</sup> in the same gallery, must be placed much lower, as the work of an imitator, both of Memling and Van Eyck, in the first half of the sixteenth century.

The Virgin and Child, with St. Joachim and St. Anne, at Dresden, is, perhaps by a disciple of the Van Eycks.<sup>2</sup>

The Adoration of the Magi, now in the Brussels Museum, and once the property of M. Van Rotterdam, will be described hereafter.<sup>3</sup>

It will scarcely be necessary to discuss the origin of the supposed Van Eycks once exhibited in the Lyversberg Collection at Cologne, which belong to the school of Calcar. They will find a place elsewhere. There are, however, some pictures which bear the name of John Van Eyck, and which, although they are too feebly executed for the master, are yet worthy of mention.

Two panels attributed to John Van Eyck, in the Madrid Museum, belong to the school, and recall to mind the manner of Petrus Cristus.<sup>4</sup>

The portrait of the Cardinal de Bourbon, in the Moritz Kapelle, at Nürnberg, cannot chronologically be given to Van Eyck.<sup>5</sup>

With respect to the Descent from the Cross, in the Belvedere, at Vienna, it is obviously of a much later

<sup>1</sup> No. 45, Room I. Munich Catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> No. 1714, Dresden Catalogue, 2' 3½" by 1' 8". Assigned by Dr. Waagen, Kugler, p. 76 to Petr. Cristus, but not by him.

This is the picture described by Guarienti, in his Dictionary of Painters, as a splendid Van Eyck, dated 1416. No such date is on it now. See also Roscoe's Lanzi, ed. 1847. Vol. I. p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Brussels Mus. No. 14. See postea. "Imitators of Van Eyck and Memling."

<sup>4</sup> Nos. 1401 and 1403, Madrid Catalogue. See postea.

<sup>5</sup> No. 22, Catalogue of the Moritz Kapelle, 1' 1" by 10".

date than the period of the Van Eycks, and belongs to the later school of Leyden; some of the details of the subject would do honour to any school; the picture, however, is very small.<sup>1</sup>

The catalogues of the Belvedere Gallery also attribute to John Van Eyck a Madonna with the Infant Christ at her breast. The Virgin is clothed, as usual, in blue, and wears a crown; she stands before a throne magnificently decorated with Gothic architecture. This panel is not by John Van Eyck, but by an imitator of his manner; the flesh tints are grey, and the modelling poor; some parts lack delicacy of handling; the Infant, more than any other portion of the composition, recalls to mind the manner of Van Eyck; the general style and execution of the whole remind us of the so-called Van Eyck of the late Mr Rogers' collection.<sup>2</sup>

Similar characteristics mark a panel also in the Belvedere representing St. Catherine, erroneously attributed to Hubert Van Eyck, and by the same hand as this imitation of John Van Eyck.<sup>3</sup>

Two panels, which apparently once formed part of a single picture, are separated, and hang in the galleries of Earl Dudley and Mr Baring; the first is a scene in the interior of a cathedral, where a priest is elevating the host before a pious crowd.<sup>4</sup> The outlines of the figures are firm, but there is much monotony in the execution; the parts most worthy of commendation are the architecture and accessories; there is a strong contrast visible between the red shadows and the pale

<sup>1</sup> No. 12. Second floor, second room, Belvedere. Wood, 1' 1" by 8½".

<sup>2</sup> No. 18, Belvedere Catalogue, second floor, second room. Wood, 7' by 4½".

<sup>3</sup> See antea.

<sup>4</sup> Dudley House; of old at the Egyptian Hall. Wood, 23¼ inches by 17¾ inches, with a monogram behind not unlike a P.

lights; on the back of the panel is a monochrome of a bishop. The second panel represents St. Giles, in a landscape, extracting an arrow from the back of his favourite fawn; a prince, attended by a bishop, kneels as if asking pardon for the death of the fawn. This panel, like that of Earl Dudley, is not by Van Eyck, but by a late imitator of his manner; in the movement of the figures, the design, and the short and contracted form of the hands, the two pieces are similar. The subject of St. Giles is painted with great body of colour, and is somewhat cold in tone; this is, perhaps, ascribable to the removal of the reddish tint which covered the surface, according to the custom of the Flemings, and especially of the followers of Van Eyck, who sought to obtain the vigour of colour of their master, without possessing the same means or the same cleverness. Behind this panel, as in that of Earl Dudley's collection, is a *chiaro-scuro* figure of St. Peter.<sup>1</sup> The disciples of Van Eyck varied in the style of their productions, and often exhibited two different manners in parts of the same picture; it is, therefore, probable that these two compositions are by the same hand, and that they once formed part of one triptych; they are works of the same period, and executed by an imitator of the mode of colouring practised by the Van Eycks.

Amongst a collection of valuable portraits in Stafford House one represents a bust of a man, with a black cap and dark brown habit, showing beneath it a white vest, clasped with a jewel. The figure is relieved on a green ground, and has the attitude of one looking

<sup>1</sup> Now in Mr. Baring's Collection. Sold at Christies' in 1854, from the Collection of T. Emerson, Esq. Wood, 23 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches by 17 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

out of a window. On the back of the panel is a badge, surrounded by flames, with the war-cry or motto, "*Nul ne si frote.*" The portrait is recognised from this and from an engraving in Montfaucon to be that of Anthony, bastard of Burgundy, natural brother of Philip the Good. Mr. Planché supposes the Bastard to have been between forty and fifty years of age when the likeness was taken; and after considering the dates of his birth and death, comes to the conclusion that the bust was executed between 1465 and 1467,—that is, twenty-five or twenty-seven years after the death of John Van Eyck.<sup>1</sup> The picture itself confirms these data; it is doubtless one of the fine productions of the period subsequent to John Van Eyck; we need but compare it with that of the latter master in the National Gallery, and those of Memling, in the late Mr Rogers' collection, to come to the conclusion that the "Bastard" is by a man combining the style of Van Eyck with that of Memling. We have the same portrait assigned to Memling (No. 1719) in the Museum of Dresden.

A small panel in the Lichtenstein Gallery represents the Elevation of the Host, and is attributed to John Van Eyck; but it has every mark of a German production of the 16th century.

A Virgin and Child, ascribed to Van Eyck, once in the Wallerstein collection at Kensington Palace, and now in the National Gallery, is more in the style of Memling than in that of the founder of the school of Bruges.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Planché, *Archeologia*, Appendix to Vol. XXVII, who quotes Montfaucon, *Monarchie Française*, p. 142. This portrait, says Mr. Planché, a Polish nobleman said, had formerly belonged to Count Sierakowski, of Warsaw.

<sup>2</sup> Wallerstein Collection, formerly Kensington Palace, No. 53. 1 ft. 4 in. by 11 in., and National Gallery No. 707.



Two portraits of Hubert and John Van Eyck, in the Museum of Dijon, are copies of those in the altar-piece at Ghent.<sup>1</sup>

Amongst the pictures erroneously assigned to John Van Eyck, two in the collection of Prince von Hohenzollern Sigmaringen deserve to be noticed, one the Virgin, the other the Angel Annuntiate. These are panels of the close of the 15th century, and probably by Gerard David of Bruges.<sup>2</sup>

Margaret, a younger sister of the Van Eycks, is noticed in books as a painter so enthusiastically wedded to art that she never married.<sup>3</sup> Records now considered apocryphal once led to the belief that she was affiliated to a religious sisterhood in Ghent.<sup>4</sup> She may have devoted herself to miniature rather than to panel painting, yet of this we have no certainty; and it is merely as a matter of conjecture that we can connect her name with the missal of the Duke of Bedford, of which the following is a description:—

This splendid volume containing forty-five large miniatures and 4300 smaller ones, seems, from a note appended to the calendar under the month of February, to have been commenced in 1424<sup>5</sup>, two years only before the death of Margaret Van Eyck. It was incomplete as late as the year 1433, as is proved by its containing the joint arms of Bedford and Luxemburg; the marriage of the Duke of Bedford with Jacqueline, daughter of Pierre of Luxemburg, having taken

<sup>1</sup> No. 225, Dijon Catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> Collection of Prince von Hohenzollern Sigmaringen. Exhibited, in 1869, at Munich; each panel m. 0. 78 h. by 0. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Van Mander, u. s. 199. Værnewyk. Hist. v. Belgie, u. s. 119.

<sup>4</sup> See antea, and Weale in Beffroi, u. s. II. 212—13.

<sup>5</sup> Breviarium Sarisberiense. No. 273 MSS. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Cat. La Vallière, Paris, 1783. No. 569. Regula pro anno bissextili, et inceptit secundum computationem Romanæ curiæ anno Domini milles. quadrigentesimo vicesimo quarto et finit lettera dominicalis A.

place in that year. It remained incomplete probably in consequence of the death of the Duke at Rouen in 1435.

It is not necessary to notice the whole of the miniatures. It will be sufficient to examine the first large one which occupies the 8th page, and afterwards deal more summarily with the rest.

This miniature, which measures  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches by  $3\frac{1}{8}$ , represents the adoration of the Eternal and our Saviour by the saints of the Old Testament. In the upper part of the leaf on the right sits Christ crowned with thorns and carrying the cross<sup>l</sup>; below him the Eternal enthroned is surrounded by red and green angels floating in an atmosphere of gold and rays. Beneath these two figures, in the foreground of a flowery meadow retreating in perspective to a half distance of trees, and a background of barren rocky hills, kneel on one side (the left) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, on the other (the right) Moses, David, and Malachi. Abraham is wrapped in a blue mantle shot with gold, wears a white hood over his head, and has a gold vest fastened to his waist by a belt; Isaac is in a red mantle, lined with green, covering a vest of blue; Jacob wears a vest of green, over which falls a mantle of rosy red lined with light blue and white; the heads of Isaac and Jacob are bare. Moses wears a sort of horned head-dress, a gold vest gathered in by a girdle, and a blue mantle lined with white; David carries the crown of the kings of Israel, the purple robe and ermine; Malachi, in a rosy red vest, wears a blue cap and a mantle of the same, lined with blue.

It will be remarked that the adjustment of colours in the various costumes of the figures is true to tradition and custom, but the key of the whole is rather light and transparent. The character of the heads is energetic; their expression dignified and intelligent; the hands are of good proportions, and the conception generally is that of an artist who shows that he is at least on the right road to progress; there is some inequality, however, to be observed in the execution, and the heads are not all equally grand; that of Abraham combines most agreeable features; the draperies are not free from angularity but they are massive and ample without overweight; the flesh tints are laid on with great care, and have all the transparency that can be desired. The author, in truth,

maintains himself almost on a level with the painter of the miniatures in the MS. bible of the Paris Library.<sup>1</sup> As for the angels round the Eternal and in the sky of the lower group, they still peculiarly maintain the character of those of the school of Van Eyck. The ornament which surrounds the miniature is rich and crowded with figures; gold light is lavished on all parts of it; below this ornament are painted the arms of Bedford. The next large miniature represents the Birth of our Saviour (p. 57). The small miniatures which follow (pp. 81, 82, 83, 84, 97) are somewhat less able than the preceding ones. Again a large miniature is found at p. 106, representing the Adoration of the Magi; it is executed in a different style from the first, with traces of the Cologne manner visible in the drapery and veil which cover the head of the Virgin; there is also more angularity in the folds of the dresses, and more gold lavished on the garments of a kneeling king. From p. 106 to 183 the spaces for small miniatures are empty, the arabesque ornament complete. Then follow several pages in which the calligrapher has completed his work, but the ornament is absent. Further on, at p. 199, the ornament and writing are merely indicated with point, but the small miniatures are there. The latter, however are of inferior quality, of a later period than previous ones, and remarkable for angularity of draperies and abuse of gold lights. A little further on more empty spaces. The large miniature (p. 213) representing Christ entering Jerusalem, is feebler than those which precede it, and seems to have been executed by the same hand which left its mark on the best of the small miniatures. The character of the figures is feeble, a prevalent red tone marks the high lights, and the shadows are of a blueish green tint. More small miniatures follow; they are worthy of little notice. At page 228 a large one representing Mary at the Sepulchre, is by the same hand as the Christ entering Jerusalem. Then follows calligraphy without painted subjects for many pages, a few small miniatures further on, another large drawing at p. 270, and at p. 278 yet another, which seems to have been executed by the same hand as the first. From this page to p. 544, the numerous large and small miniatures are not above the lowest average previously

<sup>1</sup> Biblia Sacra (Bibl. Nat.) 6829, u. s.

taken. The picture at p. 544 is a representation of the Death of the Virgin. Mary lies in a truckle bed surrounded by saints; the episode of the Ascension is depicted higher up, and four angels are seen touching instruments or singing on each side of the principal group; above this again is the Virgin receiving a crown from a triple headed group surrounded by red angels. The composition of this episodic miniature is good as to distribution, but the manner is unlike that of the first large drawing, particularly as regards colour. Two more large miniatures follow, the first at p. 567, the second at p. 618. The latter represents the Madonna enthroned and receiving the blessing of the Eternal; red angels hover around; below the group are the patriarchs, below them again saints having each an angel near him; lower still, female saints marshalled in fair artistic order. The small miniatures continue on to the 649th page. The Latin writing without ornament runs to the end of the Vol. at p. 711.

If Margaret Van Eyck ever painted pictures, the memory of them has faded away. She died very shortly after Hubert, and is said to have been buried by his side.<sup>1</sup> Of the works assigned to her the majority are careful, cold, and feeble. One, which may be taken as an example of the rest, is the Virgin and Child in the National Gallery, once in the Wallerstein collection at Kensington Palace.<sup>2</sup>

John Van Eyck's widow paid the rent of his house for two years after the painter's death, and then sold it. She still lived in 1445, as we learn from her subscribing to a lottery.<sup>3</sup> She seems to have died about 1448, when her daughter, Lyennie (Lievine) Van Eyck, retired to a convent in her father's native town of Mæs-

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s. 202.

<sup>2</sup> London, National Gallery, No. 708. Wood, 7¾ inch. h. by 6½ inches.

<sup>3</sup> 1440—41. Receptum anno 1441 victua Johannis de Eyke XXX sol. par. De Stoop, u. s. cit. acc. of St. Donatian of Bruges.—See also *Messenger des Sciences et des Arts*. 80. Ghent. 1824. p. 51.

eyck. "A Lyennie van der Eecke fille de Jehan van der Eicke," says G. Pouppet in his account for 1448-49, "jadis paintre varlet de chambre de MdS. pour don que MdS. lui a fait pour une fois pour Dieu et aulmosne, pour soy aidier à mettre religieuse en l'église et monestère de Mazeck ou pays de Liège . . . XXIII. francs."<sup>1</sup>

Lambert Van Eyck, whose name survives in the accounts of 1431,<sup>2</sup> was employed on certain business for the Duke of Burgundy, and ceases to be noticed after 1441. The dispersion of the painter's family seems, therefore, to have been complete. The name of Van Eyck appears, however, to have been common even in the household of the Dukes. In 1427, "Jehan van Heck, escuier; 1434-35, Hayne van Heyk, horse-dealer; 1435-36, Henry Deick, Simon van der Eyke, cutler; besides Peter, John, Gerard, Gaspard, Engelbert, Michel, Jacques, Rudolph, and a second Henry van Eyck."<sup>3</sup>

Abbé Carton, whose praiseworthy researches have been most useful, found the name of Van Eyck no less frequent in other places.<sup>4</sup> In the records of the booksellers and illuminators of Bruges are Claeys van den

<sup>1</sup> De Laborde, *Les Ducs de B.*, u. s. Vol. I. p. 395—6.

<sup>2</sup> 1431. "A Lambert de Hech frère de Johannes de Hech paintre de MdS. pour auoir esté à plusieurs foiz devers MS. pour aucunes besongnes que MS. vouloit faire . . . VII l. IX sols".—*De Lab.*, u. s. Vol. I. p. 257. Gachard, *Rapport sur les arch. de l'ancienne chambre des Comptes de Flandres à Lille*. p. 268. The above quotation has given rise to a belief (see Carton, *les trois frères Van Eyck*, and Waagen's *Kugler*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Lond. 1860. p. 73) that Lambert was a painter. As there are no pictures signed by him, those left unfinished at Ypres, or a copy of them formerly belonging to Mr. Van der Schriek and now in possession of Mr. Schollaert at Louvain, have been assigned to him. In our opinion the words, *paintre de MdS.*, refer to John van Eyck.

<sup>3</sup> De Laborde, u. s. Vol. I. *Introd.* p. XXXVII.

<sup>4</sup> C. Carton, *Annales de la Société d'Emulation de Bruges*, Tom. V. 2<sup>e</sup> Série, No. 3—4, p. 263.



Eyck, member of the guild in 1458-59; De vrouw v. d. Eyck, a member in 1478-79; and Hendric v. d. Eech, in 1481-82. Mr Goetghebuer discovered one Jan van Hyke, receiver of the hospital of St. Bavon, lez Gand, in 1346. The name of Van der Eyken is still more common. The only records which have not been noticed in reference to John Van Eyck, are two; one of salary paid, in 1432,<sup>1</sup> the other of money given by him to an illuminator of Bruges for a MS. for the Duke.<sup>2</sup>

The epitaph of John Van Eyck still stood in the sixteenth century, in St. Donatian, and was inscribed as follows, on a pillar of that church:—

“Hic jacet eximiâ clarus virtute Joannes,  
In quo picturæ gratia mira fuit;  
Spirantes formas, et humum florentibus herbis  
Pinxit, et ad vivum quodlibet egit opus.  
Quippe illi Phidias et cedere debet Apelles;  
Arte illi inferior ac Polycletus erat,  
Crudeles igitur, crudeles dicite parca,  
Quæ nobis talem eripuerunt virum.  
Actum sit lacrymis incommutabile fatum;  
Vivat ut in cœlis jam deprecare Deum.”<sup>3</sup>

Funeral masses for the repose of the painter's soul were celebrated yearly; and the custom was kept up in each July for upwards of three centuries, till the first French revolution put an end to one, amongst other ceremonies, which produced an annual revenue to the church of 34 gros.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> De Laborde, u. s. Vol. I. p. 259. C. Carton, u. s. p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. ib. p. 358.

<sup>3</sup> Værnewyk, u. s. c. 47., p. 119. V. Mander, p. 203.

<sup>4</sup> Délepierre, Galerie d'artistes Brugeois. 8<sup>o</sup>. Bruges, 1840, p. 11.

## CHAPTER IV.

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### PETRUS CRISTUS.

PAINTERS of various gifts and diverse talents have been classed by historians of the later centuries as disciples of the Van Eycks; but some of these hail from Tournai, others from Brussels, Ghent, and Louvain; and it is clear that they cannot all be what history pretends that they were. We shall see how probable it is that Van der Weyden, whom Vasari classed amongst the genuine followers of John Van Eyck, ascended to a station of importance in the hierarchy of Flemish artists without being subordinate to the chiefs of the schools of Ghent or Bruges. It will appear that Hugo Van der Goes, though he spent some years at Bruges, had his largest practice at Ghent; and, if we judge of his manner by an altar-piece in Santa Maria Nuova of Florence, he was imbued with a purely realistic feeling, and manifested no bias for any one amongst his contemporaries or predecessors. Gerard Van der Meire, a guildsman of Ghent, one of the few painters whose life is known, is also one of those to whom we assign pictures from hearsay, but these pictures are all in the same manner, and are the work of an artist very slightly influenced by either of the Van Eycks. Justus of Ghent, so far as we know him, is a Flemish naturalist of the common type. Not one of these men, except Van der Weyden, seems to have followed his profession

as a master much before 1450; and most of them lived till the close of the 15th century.

One artist alone is present to us as a disciple of John Van Eyck, and that is Petrus Cristus, who imitates his teacher in technical treatment, and a certain partiality for deep tone in flesh and in dress. That Cristus was intimately acquainted with the models of John Van Eyck's workshop we might almost guess from the masks and shapes of his virgins and children; but we trace it further in the use which he makes of the master's properties, such as carpets, hangings, and accessories. In a panel preserved at Frankfort the Turkish cloth under the Virgin's feet is a counterpart of that in John Van Eyck's Madonna of Lucca, and the figures of Adam and Eve on the leg-posts of the throne are adapted from those in the altar-piece of St. Bavon.

According to a record of recent discovery Cristus was the son of one Peter of Bærle near Deynze, and he purchased the citizenship of Bruges on the 6th of July, 1444.<sup>1</sup> It has been usual to assume that he was born before 1400, because his Madonna at Frankfort purports to have been executed in 1417. An attentive examination of the date leads to the suspicion of a forgery, and we should probably read the ciphers as 1447. Something in the style of Cristus' pictures presupposes an early connection with the schools of the Rhine, and for this reason it was thought not improbable that he might be the same individual who, under the name of Cristophorus, painted an altarpiece in 1471 for the Carthusians of Cologne;<sup>2</sup> but this is mere conjecture,

<sup>1</sup> See the document in Beffroi. I. 236.

<sup>2</sup> See the proofs in J. J. Merlo's "Nachrichten von dem Leben und den Werken Kölner Künstler." 8°. Köln, 1858, pp. 82

and there is ample proof that whatever Cristus' wanderings may have been, he remained a citizen of Bruges for half a century. According to De Laborde, Cristus was not registered in the guild of St. Luke at Bruges before 1450;<sup>1</sup> but in 1446 he painted the likeness of Edward Grimston, envoy of Henry the VIth to the Burgundian court, now in possession of the Earl of Verulam; in 1447, as we may believe, he executed the Madonna of the Staedel collection, and in 1449 a large altar-piece for the goldsmiths' guild at Antwerp. His works were exported beyond the seas; and fragments of a triptych taken from a convent at Burgos bear the date of 1452, and are carefully preserved in the Museum of Berlin.<sup>2</sup> About 1454 he was sent by the Count d'Etampes to Cambrai to make copies of a miraculous Madonna recently carried thither from Rome and held in veneration as the work of St. Luke.<sup>3</sup> That Cristus and his wife were affiliated to a religious brotherhood at Bruges in 1462 has been proved by contemporary records.<sup>4</sup> The manufacture and repair of a tree of Jesse for the annual procession of the Holy Blood at

and following, and the same author's "Meister der altkölnischen Malerschule", pp. 140—42. There is nothing improbable in the statement that Cristus should have painted at Cologne in 1471. The picture which might settle the question is missing.

<sup>1</sup> De Laborde. *Les Ducs de B., u. s.* Table alphabétique p. 552 and following.

<sup>2</sup> Waagen. *Deutsches Kunstblatt*, 1854, p. 65, gives the history of the purchase of this picture.

<sup>3</sup> De Laborde (*Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s.* Preuves I. CXXVI) quotes the following: "Concluserunt domini imaginem bñ. Vg̃is. quē legavit M̃gr. Furseus du Bruille, archid. Valenchen ponenda esse in capella St̃e. trinitat." (Sitting of August 13, 1451). "Ad requisitionem illustris dñi comitis de Stampis, Petrus Cristus, pictor incola Brugen. Tornacen. Dioc. dep̃xit tres imagines ad similitudinem illius imaginis bñ. Mar. et Sanctæ Virg. quæ in capella est trinitat. collocata." (Sitting of April 24, 1454.)

<sup>4</sup> Beffroi, u. s. I. 237.

Bruges is noted in the accounts of the city for 1463 and 1467. In 1469 Cristus was one of the "notables" of his guild;<sup>1</sup> in 1471 he was one of the subdeans of that body who helped to try Pierre Coustain and his assistant Jehan Hervy for practising the art of painting without paying dues to the corporation. It appears to have been in evidence on this occasion that Coustain was valet to the Duke of Burgundy, and the court decided that he was on this ground exempted from the charges and restrictions of his trade.<sup>2</sup>

Petrus Cristus was no worthy follower of Hubert van Eyck, whose grandeur and simplicity were beyond his comprehension; he was inferior to John Van Eyck as a draughtsman and a colourist, yet as a portrait painter he excelled. Unversed in scriptural lore, he occasionally fell into the fanciful extravagances which became disagreeable in Jerom Bosch. As a composer of sacred altar-pieces he was laborious, painstaking, and honest. What repels us most in his composed pieces is the vulgar quality of the *dramatis personæ*, their awkwardness of build, and conspicuous disproportion. A wooden doll usually represents the infant Christ, whilst the Virgin is a round-headed, full-cheeked damsel with copious locks brushed behind the ear and falling to the shoulders. Hard outlines and superabundant drapery are as characteristic of his style as deep toned and brown coloured flesh tints; and his pictures in their adumbrations are an exact contrast to the clear ones of Van der Weyden. The alternate study of Flemish and Cologne masters is evident in all panels assignable to the master. Minuteness of detail and sombreness of colour are peculiarities of the one, short

<sup>1</sup> See Le Beffroi, u. s. I. 237.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ib. 205.



stature and round heads are known features of the other. At Cologne there had been two great painters, Wilhelm, whose elegance of forms, whose kindliness of expression and religious feeling appear to have been appreciated by the younger Van Eyck, and Stephen, whose talent was cast in a less refined and less pleasing mould. The sympathies of Cristus were apparently with Stephen, and not with Wilhelm. Yet if we ask where and when Cristus fell under the influence of the Rhenish school, we may be forced to confess that there is no proof of the fact beyond that which we find in pictures. Cristus was unknown to Van Mander, but no stranger to Vasari or Guicciardini,<sup>1</sup> but neither of the latter says that he was John Van Eyck's pupil. We may trace the dependence of the one on the other in two ways; firstly, in pictures where the hand of the master seems modified by that of a disciple, as in the Madonna with the fountain of the Suermondt collection;<sup>2</sup> secondly, in pictures with the disciple's signature, such as that of the Staedel collection, where, as we saw, Cristus appears to inherit the properties of Van Eyck's atelier. A very characteristic and interesting work of his early period is the portrait of Edward Grimston, executed, we may believe, at Calais, whither Grimston came in 1446 on a secret mission to the Burgundian court. The arms of Grimston are on the front, the painter's signature on the back, of the panel. The head is that of a man of 50, with a long beardless face, wearing a black hood and green vest, and a coat with red

<sup>1</sup> Vasari, IV.-163. Guiccardini, u. s. p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Aix La Chapelle. Suermondt Coll. See antea in John Van Eyck. In the same style and probably assignable to Cristus is the Virgin and Ch. (Wood M. 1. 29 h. by 0.80) from the Weyer collection No. 42 in the Museum of Brussels.

sleeves. The tones are full and rich, and light and shade are balanced in vigorous contrasts.<sup>1</sup>

The Virgin at Frankfort sits, round faced and contented, under a red damask dais, supported by crystal columns with red curtains twined round them. She is dressed in a dark blue tunic of great amplitude; with her right hand she supports on her knee a naked infant with outstretched and rigid arms and legs; in her left she holds a sprig of white flowers towards which the Saviour's left arm is extended; the drapery falling from her lap is fairly cast, and does not extend in the profuse quantity peculiar to John Van Eyck, over the raised throne on which the dais stands. To the left is St. Jerom, bare-headed, in cardinal's robes; behind him a bit of Flemish interior, a trellice-worked window, with one of the shutters open, showing the blue sky behind; on the right St. Francis, bare-footed, carrying a crystal jewelled cross, relieved on a clear landscape viewed through an open door. It is a quiet scene with more than the necessary share of stillness in it, wrapped in a reddish dusky twilight, and without strong relief or projection of shadow. The flesh is of a sombre and ruddy tinge, the drapery not too cornered, the detail minute and finished. The marks of hatching are nowhere concealed, but, taken in its complete form, the picture is not without power.<sup>2</sup> Similar characteristics stamp as an original *Cristus* a panel at the Madrid Museum,

<sup>1</sup> Collection of the Earl of Verulam, exhibited in 1866 at South Kensington. Wood, 1 f. 2½ h. by 0 f. 10½ inches . . inscribed at the back, "PETRUS XPI ME FECIT A 1446." To Mr. George Scharf we owe it that this picture was rescued from oblivion; he also established the identity of the person represented.

<sup>2</sup> No. 65, Staedel Gallery, Frankfort. Purchased from the Aders' Collection, signed "Petrus Xpr. me fecit, 1417." Wood, 16" 3" by 15" 9".

divided into four compartments, representing the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Birth of our Lord, and the Adoration of the Magi. Each of these subjects is seen through a pointed arch, carved with subjects from the Passion. Some of the figures have a faint resemblance to those of the Last Judgment by Cristus, at Berlin, but their colouring and execution are more akin to the Madonna of Frankfort.<sup>1</sup>

St. Elisius, offering the ring to a youthful couple, now in the collection of Mr. Oppenheim, at Cologne, taxed the powers of Cristus, as compositions of a large size generally taxed the Flemish painters of the fifteenth century, not perhaps to a great extent, but sufficiently to make the effort visible. Marked by hard outlines, and a tone more sombre and opaque than usual, the disagreeable features of this picture are rendered striking by its size.<sup>2</sup>

More ambitious in subject the panels of 1452 at Berlin represent the Last Judgment and the Annunciation. The Saviour sits in the heavens holding up both hands to show the stigmata. His naked frame is partly surrounded by a long red mantle, his feet rest on a crystal orb, and his seat is on a rainbow; on each side of him are the pillar and the cross, and a couple of angels blowing brazen trumpets; below the Saviour stand two groups of saints, one composed of females, headed by the Virgin, another of males presided by St. John the Baptist. In front, to the right and left are two long benches resting in air, on which the twelve apostles in monkish costume are seated; the

<sup>1</sup> No. 454, Madrid Museum Catalogue. Wood, 2 feet 10 inches 6 lignes by 3 feet 10 inches, Spanish measure; injured by age.

<sup>2</sup> Cologne. Mr. Oppenheim. Wood, inscribed: "ũ petr̃ xpĩ me fecit a<sup>o</sup> 1449." Painted for the goldsmiths' guild at Antwerp.

sky beneath is light, and descends to a horizon of water and hills, and a green meadow out of which men and women may be seen issuing from their graves; a black devil is dragging two of these from their earthly resting places. In the foreground the Archangel in black armour has felled the demon; his right foot rests on the head of a skeleton whose arms support the burning vault of hell, in which a stream of fire fed by various monsters preys on the souls of the wicked. In the expression of the faces there is nothing holy or noble; the Saviour stares in wonder; the saints display the act without the expression, of prayer. The Archangel is ugly, with a large forehead and nose and heavy eyelids; the Virgin and saints have the round head of the Cologne school, and vestments of no great elegance. The panel in short exhibits feeble powers of composition, expression, and design, and betrays to some extent that ignorance of legendary or traditional lore which characterizes so many painters of the period. The colour is disagreeable and raw, the outlines are peculiarly hard and black, and a dull sunless twilight pervades the whole surface.

The second panel is divided into two parts. In the upper is the Annunciation, the Virgin and announcing Angel strongly marked by rotundity of head; through the windows we see a hilly landscape with the Virgin and St. Joseph, and three angels kneeling before the Infant Saviour; in a hut, oxen and an ass.<sup>1</sup> In the lower

<sup>1</sup> Berlin Museum. No. 529<sup>a</sup> the Annunciation. No. 529<sup>b</sup>, the Last Judgment. Each panel 4 f. 7 h. by 1 f. 9½, inscribed in the first: "Petrus Xp̄r me fecit," in the second: "Anno Domini MCCCCLII." Bought of Mr. Frasinelli, who purchased them at Segovia whither they had been taken from Burgos. On the outer sides are monochromes of St. Peter and St. Paul.—A copy of the Archangel is No. 47, second floor, second room, at the Belvedere. Wood 1 f. 6 h. by 0 f. 11.

compartment is the Adoration of the Shepherds, one of whom is remarkable for large eyelids and forehead.

On a smaller scale, and in the feeling of the Van Eyck school, yet still very highly finished, are two wings of a triptych in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg<sup>1</sup> representing an earlier form of the art of Cristus with many of the features which distinguish the panels at Berlin. Here too we have to deal with a picture exported abroad and purchased at Madrid. On one side is Christ crucified between the thieves, Longinus striking him with his lance, St. John Evangelist and the Virgin fainting in the arms of the Maries; on the other, Christ in Judgment, with the Virgin, the Baptist and the apostles; and beneath them St. Michael, and souls attacked by devils. In forms, faces, colour, and expression the stamp of Cristus' art is unmistakeable.

Much in the spirit of John Van Eyck again, and, perhaps one of the best efforts of Cristus, is a kneeling patron recommended by Saint Anthony in a landscape, a deep ruddy toned picture of fine execution in the Gallery of Copenhagen;<sup>2</sup> and a Virgin and Child of the same quality in the Museum of Turin.<sup>3</sup> Very fine also, and a favourable specimen of the manner of our artist, are two portraits, male and female, at the Uffizi in Florence, ascribed to Hugo van der Goes, for the sole reason that they belonged to the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova.<sup>4</sup> The male wears a black cap, and his

<sup>1</sup> St. Petersburg. Hermitage, No 444. Wood. Each panel 1 f.  $8\frac{3}{4}$  h. by 8 inches and  $\frac{3}{4}$ , bought in Spain by the late Prince Tatistcheff.

<sup>2</sup> Copenhagen Museum. No. 167. Wood.

<sup>3</sup> Turin Museum. Wood No. 359. M. 0,31 h. by 0,25.

<sup>4</sup> Florence Uffizi. No. 749. Wood. Large as life, from the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. On the back of the panels are monochromes of the Virgin and Angel Annuntiate.



hair is cut across the forehead and round the head. The dress of the period, a long sleeved mantle lined with fur, covers his form, and a jewelled collar hangs from his neck. In his left hand is a missal. The female also holds a book, and wears a long blue cap and white veil, a claret coloured dress, laced in front, and a warm brown jacket with light sleeves; a jewelled collar is clasped on a thin neck, and a coral bracelet adorns the wrist; through a window, we see a landscape with figures. A coat of arms above the man's head might tell us who he is; at present he passes for one of the Portinari. If we believe, as the style tells us, that the painter is Cristus, a clear proof is afforded of the clever manner in which an artist of comparative feebleness in subject pieces may display power as a painter of portrait. Though deep toned and dimly brown, the flesh tints are modelled most carefully and with consistence of impast; the drawing is firm and correct, and light and shade are admirably disposed.

In the same feeling, and full of power, is an embrowned, ruddy portrait at the National Gallery, a likeness of Marco Barbarigo, who was Consul of the Venetians in London in 1449. Though here assigned to Gerard van der Meire, the panel has much to remind us of Cristus in the duskiness of its flesh tints, the glow of its colour and the blending of its tones; it has not the searching minuteness of John Van Eyck, but produces effect by depth, richness, and oily polish. The face is young and round, the coat is red, the hood cap with lappets of a darkling purple is relieved on a brown green ground; in the right hand a letter bears the address of Marco himself.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> London, National Gallery, No. 696, from the Manfrini Collection. Wood. Bust, 9½ inch. h. by 6½. "On the letter we

Another work of this class "a Lady of the Talbot family" in the Berlin Gallery is now deprived of its coloured glazing and was of old, it is said, inscribed with the words "Opus Petri Christophori." This is not the form in which Cristus usually signed his pictures; still it may be unsafe to affirm that the portrait is not from his hand; it is certainly of the 15th century both as regards costume and execution. The face is a strange one, curiously marked by a Chinese obliquity in the opening of the eyes; the long cap and veil of the period cover a forehead from which the hair is all brushed away; a gauze veil falls to the shoulders and is fastened at the breast by a pin; the dress is a dark bodice and a dark blue mantle lined with fur. The flesh tints and dress are painted in the technical manner of the Van Eycks in cold but soft and harmonious tones, with careful modelling and copious colour; the drawing is firm without being hard, and the embroidered details are in relief.<sup>1</sup>

It would be unfair to assign to Cristus the Saint Jerom in the Antwerp Gallery, which seems to be a feeble production of the Flemish school of a later period.<sup>2</sup>

Two or three pictures once forming part of the Lyversberg collection, were attributed to Christophorus who painted the altar-piece of the Carthusians of Cologne; but it is enough to state that these compositions are of a much later date than Petrus Cristus, and appear to be the work of a painter bred in the secondary schools

read: "Spetabili et egregio Dno Marcho barbaricho qd'n Spetabilis Dnj Franzisj p<sup>o</sup>churatoris Sti. Marzj, Londonis."

<sup>1</sup> Berlin Mus. No. 532. Wood, 11 inches h. by 9 inches from the Solly collection. The ground behind the bust is grey and sombre.

<sup>2</sup> No. 32, Antw. Cat. Wood, 0,29 m. by 0,19.

of Westphalia and caricaturing the manner of Lucas of Leyden, whose name has been given to pictures in that style in various galleries.

In the Madrid Museum there is a representation of a clerical functionary of Cologne in prayer, attended by St. John the Baptist, who holds the Lamb and book; the Virgin, close by, sitting on a couch.<sup>1</sup> The picture, though attributed to Van Eyck, is rather in the manner of Petrus Cristus; its hard outlines are particularly noticeable, and the damage done to the panel increases this defect. The head of the Virgin is round, after the fashion of the painters of Cologne, and shows the study of their school; whilst the lengthy extremities are characteristic of the disciples of John Van Eyck; the legs of St. John the Baptist are designed with truth, notwithstanding their exaggerated thinness. Another feature, which appears to be a reminiscence of the Van Eycks, is that of the convex looking-glass, the chandelier, and furniture, which are entirely Flemish. This panel most resembles that of St. Elisius—in those parts, at least, which are not too much injured.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 1401—1403, Madrid Catalogue. Signed "Año milleno C. quater X̃ter et o. hic fecit—mīster Henricus Werlis m̃gr. colōñ." Wood, 3 f. 7 by 1 f. 8, Spanish measure. This signature is much damaged; and where a blank is left are the remnants on the panel of a word.

<sup>2</sup> In the Brussels Museum is a Virgin and child ascribed to Cristus. It was originally in the abbey of Budingen in Westphalia and was purchased for 900 thalers (£ 135) at the Weyer Sale, in Cologne. (Not seen). A false Cristus is that representing the coronation of Emperor Frederick II. (Wood) m. 0,73 h. by 0,72, in possession of Mr. Rauter in Munich.

## CHAPTER V.

### GERARD VAN DER MEIRE.

AMONGST the painters of the Flemish school whose names have been historically preserved, Gerard Van der Meire may be taken as having held at Ghent a position similar to that of Cristus at Bruges. He is described, on doubtful authority, as a pupil of Hubert,<sup>1</sup> but Van Mander says that he began life after the death of John Van Eyck; and he was not free of his guild at Ghent until 1452.<sup>2</sup> It is our misfortune to be unable to trace a single one of the works assigned to him by old authors, a Madonna at Saint Bavon of Ghent, a Lucretia, and the likeness of a nun;<sup>3</sup> but Gerard's rise to honour in the guild, and his election to sub-dean of the corporation in 1474, tell of steady and respectable practice.<sup>4</sup> Taking an altar-piece in Saint Bavon of Ghent as a genuine specimen of Gerard's manner, we have hardly an impress of Van Eyck's teaching. The centre panel contains the crucifixion, the wings, Moses

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Delbecq's *Chronique manuscrite du 15<sup>e</sup> siècle*, cit. in *Messenger des sciences etc<sup>a</sup>. de Belgique* 1824. p. 132. This MS. chronicle is now supposed to have no claim to originality. See Ruelens *Notes et additions*, u. s., CXVIII.

<sup>2</sup> Van Mander, u. s., 205. "Méester Gheraert van der Meire fs. (filius) Pieter." List of the corporation of St. Luke, in E. de Busscher's *Recherches sur les peintres Gantois*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Gand. 1859. p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> *Chronique*, u. s., Sanderus, *De Gand. Erud.* etc. u. s., 47. Van Mander 205.

<sup>4</sup> List of the corporation in de Busscher; *Recherches*, u. s., 209.

striking the rock, and Moses raising the brazen serpent. There is something in the total absence of skill which marks these compositions to prove that the painter was of moderate powers; feeling, expression, atmosphere, and tone are alike wanting. Light flesh tints of opaque substance are mildly rounded with ash greys which give but an imperfect idea of rotundity or relief. Dresses, in the fashion of the 15th century, are cast into broken folds and finished with painful minuteness; length and slenderness and bony rigidity characterize the figures. Are we to believe that this altar-piece was executed by "Ger. Van der Meeren," whose name it bears; is the signature a forgery, or is the original character of the panels lost under modern restoring? We might be tempted to answer some of these questions in the affirmative, and must, indeed, do so if Van der Meire is to be considered something more than a mere house-painter.

Two pictures in the Gallery of Berlin have been assigned to Gerard van der Meire, either because the name traditionally clung to them or because, in certain general features, they resemble the altarpiece of Ghent.

The first of these represents the Visitation and a kneeling abbot in a landscape of houses, trees, and hills.<sup>1</sup> The proportions of the figures, owing, perhaps, to the peculiar state of the two principal ones, are somewhat short, those of the faces are a little long. The Virgin's hair is parted on a very broad forehead, and falls in locks over her blue mantle; a thin neck, a long nose, a small mouth, and a soft expression, mark the face; the hands are delicate and carefully detailed, the draperies somewhat angular; a pallid general tone

<sup>1</sup> No. 542. Berl. Cat. 1 f. 10, 2 by 1 f. 8, 2. prus. measure. Wood.



of clear and rosy hue is faintly relieved by dainty shadow. A general tint pervades the foreground of flowers, the distant houses, and landscape, which have not the charm of atmosphere peculiar to the Van Eycks; the carnations are melted into each other with great care; the vestments are painted with body of colour, and golden rays form the nimbus of the Virgin and St. Elizabeth. In the second picture,<sup>1</sup> which represents the Epiphany, the same style and treatment may be observed, although the surface is damaged by rubbing down.

A more perfect rendering of the Visitation by the same hand may be seen in the gallery of Baron Speck von Sternburg at Lüttschena near Leipzig,<sup>2</sup> its careful execution and perfect state of preservation affording an excellent example for study, and, if it be by Van der Meire, justifying Van Mander's praise of the painter. St. Elizabeth and the Virgin have met on a path leading from a block of castellated buildings on the right hand, St. Elizabeth clad in a light red dress and mantle, with a white cap on her head, the Virgin, with flowing hair, habited in a purple tunic and blue mantle lined with grey fur. The state of the two females is marked with realistic precision, and further indicated by the reciprocal movement of the thin arms and elegant hands of each on the person of the other. In the distance are trees, a pond with swans, a plain with figures and distant hills, and a pure blue sky with silver-edged clouds. The Virgin's brow is large and spacious; the face and nose are rather long, the mouth small, the eyes meek in expression, and the neck slender; and a clear pallor contrasts

<sup>1</sup> No. 527. Berl. Cat. 1 f. 10, 2 h. by 1 f. 8 1/2 Prus. meas. Wood.

<sup>2</sup> 1 f. 11 1/2 h. by 1 f. 1 1/2 English. Wood.

with the deeper complexion of St. Elizabeth, whose small hands, with graceful but minute detail of parts, are marked by distinct wrinkles at the joints. Both figures, for the reason already mentioned, seem somewhat short in stature; and, owing to a high centre of vision, appear less firm on the ground than they might be. The colour of the flesh tints is pale and rosy, modelled with great care and softness, and without much shadow; the landscape and high lights of the clouds are firmly touched, and give a pleasing effect to the scene, which, particularly in the full vegetation of the foreground, and broken nature of the nearer parts, is deficient in aërial perspective; the drapery has a certain angularity, and is worked in with a full body of colour. In comparing this picture with others of the Flemish school, we shall discover a manner distant from that of the Van Eycks, nearer to that of Van der Weyden, and not in the least resembling that of Memling. Akin to this in treatment, but not quite so delicately handled, is a Visitation in the Gallery of Turin.<sup>1</sup>

The pictures of Berlin lead up to that of Lütschena, which, in its turn, is a guide to a still more important work in the National Gallery, the subject of which is the exhumation of St. Hubert, bishop of Liège, whose body, in full canonicals, is partially raised out of a vault by two uncowled monks.<sup>2</sup> A bishop waves a censer at the feet of the saint, whilst a pious crowd of clerks and laymen stand in mourning around. The scene is laid

<sup>1</sup> Turin Museum No. 312. Wood, m. 0,89 h. by 0,36. No. 320, a patron in prayer, is of the same size and part of the same piece, but the head is new.

<sup>2</sup> London National Gallery. No. 783. Wood, 2 f. 11½ h. by 2 f. 8., from the Beckford and Eastlake collections, now assigned to D. Bouts.

in a Gothic church, dedicated to St. Peter, whose statue stands in a niche above the altar; below it a figure of St. Hubert, adorning a bronze reliquary, is surmounted by a crucifixion in dead colour. The stone railing which surrounds the altar allows a curious face here and there to peer out; on the pinnacles of the columns, which support a series of arches, are statues of the apostles. The composition, movement, and perspective, the types of the heads are amongst the fine ones of the Flemish school. For intelligence of form, character of head, and varied expression, the painter rivals Van der Weyden; his touch in details of beard, hair, and accessories also recalls the manner of the Brussels master, but the stature of the figures, their position on the ground, the clear, transparent, and melted tones of the flesh tints, unrelieved by strong contrasts of light and shade, betray another hand, which may be that of the painter of the Visitation at Lütschena.

A picture in the National Gallery,<sup>1</sup> representing a Carmelite monk, supported by a mitred figure, bearing a crozier, is attributed to Gerard Van der Meire. It is executed in the old method of mixed tempera and oil, which is to be found in Broederlam and others of his time. The face of the kneeling Carmelite is soft, and may very properly be marked amongst the happiest efforts of a master, whose rich ornamentations are jewels alike in finish and purity.

An altar-piece, in the church of St. Sauveur at Bruges, bears the spurious inscription, "Meeren, 1500." It is in bad condition, and the colour has scaled off in several places. The subjects are the Crucifixion, Christ

<sup>1</sup> No. 264, Nat. Gal. Cat. Wood, 2f. 4½ in. by 9 inches, well preserved, from Mr. Krüger's collection at Minden.

carrying the Cross, and the Descent from the Cross; but in design, feeling, and colour they are inferior to those of the altar-piece at Ghent, and their tone is paler and colder.

Several pictures may be seen in the Gallery of Antwerp of which the style and manner are not dissimilar from those of the altar-piece of Bruges. On a triptych which represents the Carrying of the Cross, the Presentation in the Temple, and Christ among the Doctors, are the Gothic initials D. B. A. S.,<sup>1</sup> which are not indicative of any name in history. This triptych, together with a diptych representing the Mater Dolorosa and the Donatrix,<sup>2</sup> and two pictures of Christ on the Cross,<sup>3</sup> and Christ in the Tomb,<sup>4</sup> are from the church of Hoogstraaten.

We may add to this list an Annunciation, attributed to a scholar of Van Eyck, in the Madrid Museum.<sup>5</sup>

A celebrated Breviary in the library of St. Mark at Venice, once the property of Cardinal Grimani, contains miniatures assigned to Memling, Gerard of Ghent, Lievin de Witte, and others. Gerard of Ghent is said to have executed no less than 125 of these miniatures;<sup>6</sup> and some writers assume that he is identical with Gerard Van der Meire. Van der Meire may have worked in conjunction with, scarcely in continuation of, Memling. But there were other Gerards of Ghent besides Van der Meire. Gerard Horenbaut, whose style is much in the formal and finished one of the early

<sup>1</sup> Antwerp Mus. Nos. 383, 384 and 385. The first 0.65, French measure. The second and third 0.92 by 0.31.

<sup>2</sup> Antwerp Mus. Nos. 388 and 389. 0.76 m. by 0.60, French measure.

<sup>3</sup> Antwerp Mus. No. 386. 0.93 m. by 0.65, French measure.

<sup>4</sup> Antwerp Mus. No. 387. 1.03 m. by 0.32, French measure.

<sup>5</sup> No. 408, Madrid Cat. 2 f. 8 i. 6 l. by 2 f. 6 i., Spanish meas.

<sup>6</sup> Anonimo di Morelli, u. s., p. 78.

miniaturists, is more probably the person alluded to;<sup>1</sup> and this is confirmed, on examination of the miniatures themselves, by the fact that those which are not by Memling are by a more modern hand. Horenbaut is well known to have lived as late as the year 1533, and is, therefore, more likely to have been the painter than Gerard Van der Meire. Lievin de Witte, who laboured at the Breviary, is also undoubtedly an artist of the 16th century; and these miniatures must for that reason be rejected as works of Van der Meire.<sup>2</sup>

The following respecting Jan Van der Meire, brother of Gerard, is copied from Immerzeel:—"Jan Van der Meire was, like his brother, a pupil of the brothers Van Eyck, and completed, amongst other pictures, one for Charles the Rash, representing the Installation of the Order of the Golden Fleece. This artist was much esteemed at the court of the last Duke of Burgundy, whom he followed in his campaigns. He died at Nevers in 1471."<sup>3</sup> Immerzeel does not give any authority for these statements; and it is curious to find that an artist of the same name is registered in the guild of Antwerp in 1505.<sup>4</sup> Jan Van der Meire is named as the composer of two missing pictures, the Martyrdom of St. Lievin, and the Martyrdom of St. Bavon once in the Abbey of St. Bavon.<sup>5</sup> Van der Meire or Van Meire was a common name at Ghent in the 14th and 15th centuries. The register of the guild is inscribed with the names of several painters who may or may not be of one family.

<sup>1</sup> Horenbaut painted long at Ghent; amongst others for Lievin Hughenois, abbot of St. Bavon, a great patron of artists.

<sup>2</sup> We saw: the portrait of Barbarigo at the National Gallery is probably not by G. van der Meire (antea p. 144.)

<sup>3</sup> *Immerzeel. Hollandsche ende Vlamsche Konst*, p. 212.

<sup>4</sup> Reiffenberg. *De la peinture sur verre aux Pays Bas*. 8°. Brux. 1832.

<sup>5</sup> See de Busscher, u. s., p. 167.



Baldwin Van Meire was free of the guild in 1370, sworn arbitrator in 1374, and dean (dekin) in 1375 and 1383. Huughe Van Meire was a master in 1379. Gillis Van der Meire entered the guild in 1403, and was sworn arbitrator in 1409 and 1417.

Hugo Van der Meire was master in 1413, sworn arbitrator in 1421. In 1436 Jan Van der Meire, who may possibly be the person mentioned by old authors as brother (or cousin) of Gerard, was made free of the guild, as the son of Gillis Van der Meire. He was sworn arbitrator in 1447 and 1457, and dean in 1473 and 1477.

In 1440 Gillis, son of Jan Van der Meire, also entered the guild, and was chosen to act as sworn arbitrator in 1459. In 1443 Henry Van der Meire, son of Gillis, became free of the guild, and in 1471 Peter, also son of Gillis, was admitted. The latter was arbitrator in 1482, and dean in 1485. Members of the same family are still found on the register in the 16th century.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ib. ib.* pp. 187. 218.

## CHAPTER VI.

HUGO VAN DER GOES.

OLIVIER DE LA MARCHE, in his *Memoirs*, gives a picturesque account of the wedding of Margaret of York and Charles of Burgundy at Bruges in 1468, telling how the ingenuity of mechanics was exhausted in getting up "mysteries" for the pleasure and amusement of the guests, how the streets and houses of Bruges, as well as the Palace of the Prince, were adorned with canvases, stretched on frames, painted by the skilful artists of the Belgian cities.<sup>1</sup> Festivities, eating, drinking, jousts, and spouting, are minutely described whilst the canvases unhappily receive no attention. The story of the wedding, and the progress of the new princess from Damme to Bruges might gracefully fill a page; one fact in it deserves attention. Amongst the noted persons who accompanied Charles were the burgesses of the city, the various guilds of trade, and merchants of the foreign companies, the wealthiest of whom was Thomaso Portinari, agent of the Medici at Bruges, who rode in the procession at the head of the company of Florentines, attired in the dress of counsellor of the Duke. "The agents of the Medici," says Comines, "have always had such credit under cover of their name, that it would be marvellous could we believe all that has been heard and seen

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de la Marche*, 8vo. Ghent, 1566, p. 524.

respecting them. One whose name is Thomas Portu-nary, I have known to stand as pledge between King Edward and Duke Charles of Burgundy for 50,000 pieces (*escus*) on one occasion, and 80,000 on another.”<sup>1</sup> Thomaso was descended, they said, from Folco Porti-nari, founder of Santa Maria Nuova at Florence, and father of the Beatrice whose beauty won the heart of Dante. He was a rich merchant and patron of the Flemish painter Hugo van der Goes. Hugo was of a family well known in the annals of his craft in Belgium. An artist of his name was free of the guild of St. Luke at Ghent in 1395. Lievin van Goes matriculated in the same trade in 1406. Hugo was himself a master at Ghent as early as 1465;<sup>2</sup> but it is uncertain whether he was born at Ghent, at Bruges, or at Antwerp.<sup>3</sup> We cannot trace him with any certainty to the workshop of either of the Van Eycks, nor is there any reason to think that in the earlier days of his practice he followed the restless habits of his professional brethren and wandered from place to place. On the contrary, the slight memoranda that are preserved describe him as inhabiting Bruges, where a striking breadth of hand and capacity for large productions brought him into notice. Experience had taught the Flemings, as we have seen, that wall distemper was not suited to their climate; but the necessities of their shows, their partiality to ornament, required to be satisfied. Trip-

<sup>1</sup> Mémoires de Comines.

<sup>2</sup> De Busscher. Recherches, u. s., pp. 111—114.

<sup>3</sup> Guicciardini (u. s. 124), Vas. (I. 163 and XIII. 149) say Antwerp. A record which leads to the belief that Hugo was employed to value a picture by Dierick Bouts would favour the assumption that Hugo was a native of Ghent. See postea in D. Bouts. Van Mander calls him “Hughe van der Goes schilder van Brugghe” (u. s. 204); and is followed in this by Sanderus (Flandria Illust. I. 13.

tychs were small and costly, arras was brilliant but expensive. Hugo, extending the experience which he had probably gained in his earliest youth in the painting of shields and banners, transferred scriptural subjects to supple cloths which advantageously replaced, whilst they were cheaper than, arras, and thus he acquired, at once a livelihood and fame. These canvases executed in tempera colours came rapidly into such demand and were so easily produced by Van der Goes, that Van Mander says he filled the churches and mansions of Bruges and even those of Ghent with them.<sup>1</sup> Hugo's hand being thus broken in to large subjects, he found an additional source of income in making cartoons for glaziers.<sup>2</sup> At the same time the education which he had received, it matters little whether in Van Eyck's atelier or elsewhere, secured to him commissions for altar-pieces. At what time he was invited to undertake the triptych in which Thomaso Portinari caused himself to be introduced in company with his wife and family is unknown, but the altar-piece is one of the most important for its size that was produced in the middle of the 15th century, and still exists in the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova at Florence; nor is it without interest to remember that Vasari, by informing us that Hugo was the painter of this work, gave us the only clue to the master's style.<sup>3</sup>

The subject depicted is the Adoration of the Shepherds. In the central panel a long lank Infant Saviour lies naked on the ground in a litter of straw, illuminating, by the supernatural halo that encircles him,

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, p. 204. Værnewyk, Hist. van Belg. p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ib.

<sup>3</sup> Vasari, I. 163.

the figure of the kneeling Virgin. Two angels are prostrate to the Saviour's left, two more behind the Virgin; and others soar in the space above; St. Joseph to the left seems lost in contemplation; the shepherds on the right have entered the ruin where the Saviour lies; an ox and an ass ruminate in the background, which is marked on that side by a lane, on the other by a landscape in which the angel appears to the shepherds. On the left wing of the altar-piece kneel the donor and two youths supported by St. Anthony and St. Matthew; in the open distance we see the flight into Egypt. The right wing represents the patroness and two young girls in the long cap and veil of the period, kneeling and supported by St. Margaret and St. Mary Magdalen, in a landscape enlivened by miniature episodes. As a composer Hugo shows little genius; but he commits no striking mistakes. He distributes his figures with care and gives them appropriate proportions, they are even well drawn, of marked individuality, and in fair action; but there is a curious inequality in the conception of male and female form. Something engaging and above the common in the graceful shape and attitudes of female saints of slender build counterbalances a superabundant realism in face and expression. The males are more disappointing;—Christ as usual of ill considered build, and coarse in limb and foot; the shepherds more vulgar still, and the drapery cast in artificial and angular folds. Nor are these defects made good by charms of tone or atmosphere such as cover defects in the pictures of John Van Eyck. It may be that the panels have suffered from abrasion and restoring, but the flesh tints are of chalky coldness, and not without marked rawness; and the contrast between pallid female and ruddy male skin



is very strong. In one respect Van der Goes is a true child of the Netherlands; his portraits are good and true and full of life as compared with his ideal impersonations.<sup>1</sup>

Van Mander tells an anecdote which curiously illustrates the character of Van der Goes. He conceived an attachment for a lady, the daughter of one Jacob Weytens. As a memento of this attachment, he painted a picture representing the meeting of David and Abigail. It was not Abigail coming with loaves, sheep, and wine laden on asses, to deprecate the wrath that had been kindled against Nabal, but Abigail coming to meet David after the death of Nabal, and accompanied by five damsels. Van Mander and Lucas de Heere, who saw the picture, dwell on the beauty of Abigail and the damsels, and describe David as advancing to meet his bride on horseback. The question which yet remains to be solved is, whether the picture in which Hugo represented himself as David, and therefore "comely," and the daughter of Jacob Weytens as Abigail<sup>2</sup> was a memento of an accomplished fact or a mere manifestation of his wishes as to the final result of the attachment. There is no historical evidence that Hugo was ever married.

The loss of this picture was perhaps coeval with that of a crucifixion in St. Jacques of Bruges, in which Christ was represented on the cross between the

<sup>1</sup> Florence. Santa Maria Nuova. Wood. life size. The general tone of the pictures is now cold and grey. The flesh tints are yellowish in light and reddish in the transitions leading to cold grey shadow. The whole is modelled hardly but carefully with a stiff substantial layer of colour; but it is to be taken into consideration that the surfaces are abraded. The vestment tints are harsh and strong, and shaded with changing hues.

<sup>2</sup> Van Mander, 203.

thieves, and the Virgin Mary with other figures was thrown upon the foreground. It was Dürer's good fortune to see and admire this work, which unfortunately perished after it had once been rescued by extraordinary means from the hands of iconoclasts.<sup>1</sup>

If it could be proved that Van der Goes was the painter to whom the parliament of Paris applied for the execution of a picture, we should have evidence that he visited the French capital about the time of the celebrated Ghent insurrection. It appears from the registers of the Parliament, that there were payments still due in 1454 to a nameless artist for executing the "picture of the great room" which still hangs above the judges' seat in the Cour d'Appel in Paris; and there is no difficulty in supposing that this nameless artist was Van der Goes. Though it was covered till quite lately with a red varnish, this remarkable series of panels had many features in common with the Portinari nativity at Florence, and it is certainly the work of a man deeply versed in the lessons of painting as taught in Belgium towards the middle of the 15th century. On the central piece Christ is seen on the cross with the Virgin fainting in the foreground; and in the hilly distance, a view of old Paris figures for Jerusalem whilst to the right and left the Baptist and St. Louis, St. Denis, St. Charlemagne, and John the Evangelist stand in attendance; a niche above the cross contains a bust of the Eternal. What strikes us most here is the profusion of ornamental accessories, and a general absence of strong shadow. The

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, 204. Sanderus, *Flandr. Illust.* Dürer, *Reliquien*, ed. Campe. 12<sup>o</sup>. Nürnberg, 1828. pp. 121. The panel was painted over and inscribed with the 12 commandments, then restored and lost.

figure of the Baptist is a fine and powerfully wrought creation.<sup>1</sup>

After the Ghent troubles of 1450—53 Hugo van der Goes appears to have left Bruges, and settled at Ghent, where he continued to show the versatility of his talent alternately by painting large scenic canvases or small altar-pieces, and drawing cartoons for glaziers. One of these cartoons is described by Van Mander who thought it not unworthy of John Van Eyck himself;<sup>2</sup> it had been executed for the church of St. Jacques at Ghent. A votive altar-piece representing the Virgin and serving to commemorate the death of one Wouter Gaultier elicits praise equally high; it also stood in St. Jacques of Ghent, and was preserved on the tomb of Gaultier.<sup>3</sup> In another portion of the same church there hung a large crucifixion also by Hugo, in which the Saviour was represented crucified between the two thieves.<sup>4</sup> No dates are given and no clue has been discovered to prove the exact period when these pictures were completed.

In 1468 the wedding of Margaret of York with Charles the Rash took place, and Van der Goes with one Daniel de Rycke was summoned to Bruges to paint decorations or *entremetz*, which on that occasion were ordered on a scale of great splendour. Both Daniel de Rycke and Van der Goes were at this time free of the guild of St. Luke; the former

<sup>1</sup> Paris. Cour d'appel. Wood, m. 3.30 h. by 2.28. See also the records in Mr. Leon Lagrange's article in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* for 1866. Vol. XXI. p. 582. The picture was restored in 1866 and shorn of the red varnish that covered it. On the foreground is a dog, a death's head, and cross bones.

<sup>2</sup> Van Mander, p. 203.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Van Mander, p. 204.

worked in the *entremetz* at a daily salary of 20 sols, the latter at the rate of 14 sols.<sup>1</sup> It is somewhat puzzling to find an utterly unknown craftsman<sup>2</sup> receiving more than Van der Goes whose fame was already well established, but it seems unfair to draw any inferences from this fact as regards the attainments of the painters, insomuch as a few months later both of them were again employed, and the proportion of salary paid to each was reversed, Van der Goes receiving more, and De Rycke less. Margaret of York having gone through the ceremonies of her marriage at Bruges, proceeded shortly afterwards to Ghent, where immense preparations were made for her "*Joyeuse entrée*." The men employed on this occasion were Hugo and Daniel de Rycke, assisted by their several journeymen (*hulperen*). De Rycke produced the allegorical figures in front of the gates called the Walpoorte and the Torrepoorte, Hugo, the allegorical and historical figures placed in the streets through which the procession passed.<sup>3</sup> On this occasion Van der Goes received 14 livres de gros, De Rycke only 5.

From that time forward Hugo van der Goes appears to have been almost exclusively employed by the "*echevins*" of Ghent when there was occasion for a public display. Having been made free of the guild of St. Luke previous to 1467, he rose soon after to the rank of sub-dean, and during the three consecutive years, 1472—75, he was appointed dean or elder of that cor-

<sup>1</sup> Reiffenberg, Appendix to Barante's *Hist. des Ducs de Bourgogne*, Comptes de Fastré Hollet.

<sup>2</sup> De Rycke is only known from the accounts of the municipality of Bruges and Ghent.

<sup>3</sup> Comptes de la Ville de Gand ap. De Busscher, *Rech. sur les artistes Gantois*, p. 105.

poration.<sup>1</sup> In pursuit of the ordinary duties which devolved upon him he finished in 1468 the papal scutcheons that were hung in the churches of Ghent on the occasion of the "pardon" proclaimed by the Pope. In 1470, 72, 74 he completed a number of scutcheons of the same kind as well as numerous allegorical and historical figures exhibited on the days of the popular festivities: of the Rhetoricians, the inauguration and solemn entry into Ghent of Charles the Rash, and the funeral of Philip the Good, whose body, before it was transferred to Dijon, lay in state in the collegiate church of Ste. Pharaïlde (Jan. 1, 1474).<sup>2</sup>

Towards the close of a laborious life Van der Goes entered the convent of Rooden Clooster or Rouge Cloître near Brussels and spent there the last of his days. The cause of his determination to take the frock remained a secret, but the stories of his demeanour and conduct, chronicled in the annals of the monastery show that he was frequently assailed with doubts as to his prospect of salvation in the next world; and that these doubts at last drove him mad. Amongst the monks with whom he most constantly associated Gaspar Offhuys of Tournai is known as the author of

<sup>1</sup> The date of Hugo's admission to the freedom of his guild at Ghent cannot be ascertained. But this much is proved beyond a doubt. He was sworn arbitrator in 1468. No painter could rise to that rank who had not for at least one year enjoyed the freedom, and paid the usual fees of admission to the guild (*neeringhe*). No painter could take the freedom unless he had previously resided one year in Ghent. Hence it becomes certain that Hugo must have returned to his native place as early as 1466. See *De Busscher, u. s.*, *Recherches sur les artistes Gantois*, p. 113. See the same authority, p. 117, for the proofs that Hugo held the office of dean (*Dekin*) in the guild of St. Luke in 73—75.

<sup>2</sup> The Pope's bull of general grace and pardon was issued for 64 days after advent in 1468. (*De Busscher, u. s.*, pp. 70, 105—6.



a chronicle written at Rouge Cloître in 1500. In this chronicle we find an entire passage treating of Van der Goes,—a passage giving evidence of the painter's celebrity amongst his contemporaries and showing that he counted amongst his admirers persons of exalted station. "I was a novice when Van der Goes was a novice," says Offhuys. "He was so celebrated as a painter that it was said his like could not be found even beyond the Alps; he had been good rather than great in his earlier years, yet the prior, at his reception and during his probation, allowed him to indulge in pleasures which more surely recalled worldliness than penitence and humility; and the prior's tolerance was not seen without jealousy by some of our brethren. Numbers of people of rank, the Archduke Maximilian amongst the rest, constantly came to see him and admire his pictures; and through their intercession he obtained permission to frequent the guest room and join the strangers' dinners. No doubt he was subject to fits of melancholy, often thinking how he should complete the mass of works which he had to do; but what did him most harm was his copious indulgence in wine at the strangers' dinner table. Five or six years after he professed he went with his brother Nicholas and others to Cologne, and on his return he was seized with such a hot fit that but for his friends he would have laid violent hands on himself. He was brought back with difficulty to Brussels, and there the prior, who had been sent for, endeavoured to soothe his passion with the sound of music; but for a time nothing would quiet him, and he laboured long under the belief that he "was a son of perdition." At last he improved; and then, of his own accord, he gave up the habit of attending in the refectory, and took his

meals with the lay brothers.”<sup>1</sup> That wine might have had something to do with the frenzy of Van der Goes is not improbable. In 1478 he was despatched to Louvain to value a picture which Dierick Bouts had left unfinished at his death; and the payment which he received for his services was a stoup of Rhine wine.<sup>2</sup>

Hugo died in 1482, and the monks of Rouge Cloître wrote upon his tomb:

“Pictor Hugo v. der Goes humatus quiescit  
Dolet ars cum similem sibi modo nescit.”<sup>3</sup>

The name of Van der Goes is given to a Virgin and Child in the Uffizi at Florence, which is totally unlike the nativity of Santa Maria Nuova; the types are as ugly, and the outlines as hard, as those of Joachim Patenier, or such as are found in Museums under the name of Conrad Fyol of Frankfort.<sup>4</sup> A Virgin and Child in the late Puccini collection at Pistoia bore the monogram H. B., and yet was assigned to Van der Goes. We may turn from this feeble production of a German painter of the 16th century to a more important and interesting work in the church of Santa Maria del Gesù

<sup>1</sup> Originale Cenobii Rubeævallis in Zonia prope Bruxellam in Brabantia, cit. by A. Wauters in *Bulletins de l'Acad. Royale de Brux.*, u. s. No. 5. Tom. 15, pp. 723, 743.

<sup>2</sup> “Daer voer hem ende synen kinderen vergouwen ende betaelt heeft, ter estumatiën ende scatteringen van eenen den notabelsten scildere die men binnen den lande hier omtrent wiste te vindene, die gheboren es van der stad van Ghendt, ende nu wonechtich es in Rooden Cloestere in Zuenien, de somme van guldens vorscreve III<sup>c</sup>VI gul. XXXVI. pl.” Schayes (M. A. G. B.) from the Louvain archives in *Bulletins de l'Académie Royale de Belgique*. Tom. XIII. No. 11. p. 8. Wauters in Pinchart's *Annot.*, u. s., p. CCXXVI.

<sup>3</sup> Sweertius, *Monum. Sepulcra*<sup>a</sup>. Brabantiae, 12<sup>o</sup>. Antw. 1613, p. 323. Wauters in Pinchart's *Annotations*, u. s., CCXXVI.

<sup>4</sup> *Gallery of the Uffizi*. No. 698. 2<sup>b</sup>, 6<sup>c</sup>, 10<sup>l</sup>, by 2<sup>b</sup>, 1<sup>c</sup>, 8<sup>l</sup>.

at Polizzi in Sicily, an altar-piece in character like that of Santa Maria Nuova at Florence, and brought by chance to its present resting place.<sup>1</sup> The vessel on board of which the picture was freighted went ashore near Palermo, and the altar-piece was rescued from the waves and presented to the church of Polizzi. The Virgin sits on a gilded chair under a round curtained dais of gold; the Infant Saviour, sitting in a long blue dress, which exposes the greater part of his frame and legs, places his hands on the leaves of a book on the Virgin's lap; four angels play or sing on each side; a distance of trees behind a wall and a foreground of herbs and flowers complete this portion of the picture. On the panel to the left, St. Catherine, in crown and veil, sits reading, whilst a peacock struts on a distant wall; to the right stands St. Barbara. The affected attitude of the features, and the regular hands of the Virgin, are distinctly Flemish; equally so are the draperies, the angels' copes, and the jewelled ornaments; characteristic of the same school are the moody head, stiff body, and long legs of the Infant Saviour; the angels, of regular features, are not ungraceful; the drawing is firm, but a little wiry; the colour hard, and of much body; the general tone raw and cold.

The catalogue of pictures assigned to Van der Goes in Italy would be incomplete without a notice of a small Madonna in the Bologna Gallery,<sup>2</sup> the firm drawing and warm tone of which are not characteristic of the master. The Virgin, whose head is adorned with a new gold

<sup>1</sup> In 1496. See "*Sopra un antico trittico esistente in Polizzi.*" 80. Palermo. 1852.

<sup>2</sup> No. 282. Bologna Gallery. 15 inches by 17. Eng. measure. Wood.

nimbus, sits in a garden planted with trees and flowers, and rests her feet on a foreground of strawberries. Her face, of the type common to the Van Eyck school, is adorned by copious hair bound to the forehead by a cincture and falling on a blue mantle covering a yellow damask tunic lined with fur. She offers, with a delicate hand, a flower to the naked Infant on her knee. The picture is broadly treated in the draperies, its general tone is warm, its style an approach to that of the so-called Van Eyck belonging to Mr. Beresford Hope.

The name of Van der Goes is frequent in the catalogues of the Berlin, Munich, and Vienna galleries. The nearest approach to his manner may be found in one or two busts of the "Saviour crowned with thorns," the general features of which are anything but pleasing. The best of these is one on gold ground, seen in full front, with a light red drapery on the left shoulder, and joined hands.<sup>1</sup> The expression of the face indicating pain and suffering, the blood flowing from the wounds on the forehead, and the tears rolling from the eyes, show the realistic tendencies of the painter; the drawing of the face and hands is more in the style of Van der Weyden than in that of the Van Eycks; the colour is of a reddish yellow, with cold shadows. A repetition of the same subject, of darker tone and more unpleasant features, hangs close by, and differs from the first by having a purple mantle.<sup>2</sup> A third, on a blue ground, inferior to the two first, is repulsive in aspect and livid in tone, and seems to be by a later hand.<sup>3</sup> A similar example of livid colour is

<sup>1</sup> Berlin Cat. 528<sup>a</sup> 16.2 $\frac{1}{4}$  z. h. by 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  z. br.

<sup>2</sup> No. 541. Ibid. Wood, 1 f. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  h. by 0 f. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ .

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Wood, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  z. by 11. z. No. 553.

to be found in a bust of the Saviour, in the Zambecari gallery at Bologna, assigned to Dürer.

The Annunciation, a panel at Berlin, is cold and white in general tone, and yellowish white in the flesh tints; the draperies are painted with similar body to those of the Virgin of the Uffizi and stand in relief on the picture.<sup>1</sup> A Virgin and child enthroned, in the same collection, betrays a mixture of the manner of Van Eyck and Van der Weyden; the Virgin has the spacious forehead so frequent in Memling; a landscape distance is seen through a colonnade; the colour, of full body, is warm and pleasing enough.<sup>2</sup> St. Augustin enthroned with a patron at his feet, given in the Berlin catalogue of 1851 to Van der Goes, retrogrades in that of 1857 to the humbler mediocrity of Goswyn Van der Weyden.<sup>3</sup> The Saviour on the cross, the Virgin, St. John, two holy bishops, St. Agatha and St. Clara in a landscape, are of the decline of the same third rate school.<sup>4</sup> The Annunciation, in a form different from the foregoing, is by an artist of the 16th century, inferior to Patenier.<sup>5</sup> The last Judgment, a very small picture of which the upper and lower parts are by different hands, is noticeable because the head of the Saviour resembles that on gold ground, above mentioned.<sup>6</sup>

The Annunciation at Munich is almost a repetition of that assigned to Van der Goes in the Berlin Gallery.<sup>7</sup> The Pietà in the same collection is an un-

<sup>1</sup> Berlin Gal. Wood, 3 f. by 1 f. 11 1/2 z. No. 530.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Wood, 2 f. 7 z. by 1 f. 9 1/4 z. No. 529. Now called Sch. of Memling.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Wood, 2 f. by 1 f. 5 z. No. 540.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. No. 543. 550. Wood, 2 f. 4 z. by 3 f. 6 z.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. No. 548. Wood, 6 z. by 3 1/2.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. No. 600. Wood, 2 f. 2 z. by 1 f. 2 z.

<sup>7</sup> Munich Cat. No. 43 Cab. Wood, 3' 8" by 3' 5".



pleasant panel by a pupil of Van der Weyden.<sup>1</sup> The Virgin and Child in a landscape is in the mixed style of Patenier and Mostært.<sup>2</sup> Another Madonna is simply not by Van der Goes.<sup>3</sup> St. John in the Desert, signed "H. v. d. Goes," is evidently by Memling.<sup>4</sup>

It is difficult to say on what authority the portrait of a Dominican monk in the National Gallery, which was under Memling's name in the Wallerstein collection, now figures amongst the works of Van der Goes.<sup>5</sup> The Virgin and Child between the kneeling St. Paul and St. Peter in the same Museum is a picture in which the style of Van der Goes is not to be traced; a picture of paste board flesh and raised ornamentation, after the fashion of a feeble disciple of Memling.<sup>6</sup>

The Belvedere Museum contains two panels with Adam and Eve, apparently copied from the Agnus Dei of St. Bavon. They are attributed to Van der Goes, without any regard for the known peculiarities of his style.<sup>7</sup>

His name is also given, without sufficient evidence, to a Virgin and Child, adored by a figure holding a viol.<sup>8</sup> This composition, in the Belvedere is very much in the spirit of Memling's picture representing the same

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. No. 66, Cab. Wood, 1' 6" by 1' 2", now catalogued as by a Rhenish master.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. No. 53, Cabinets. Wood, 1' 6" by 1' 6", now assigned to a German.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. No. 119, Cab. Wood, 2' 2" by 1' 7", now assigned to a German.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. No. 105, Cab., now properly assigned to Memling. See postea.

<sup>5</sup> London National Gallery. No. 710.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. No. 774. Wood, 2 f. 3 1/2 h. by 1 f. 8 1/2, from the Zambeccari and Eastlake collections.

<sup>7</sup> No. 61. Room 2, second floor, Vienna, Belvedere Cat. Wood, 2' 2" by 1' 7", Austrian measure.

<sup>8</sup> No. 6, second floor, second room, Belvedere Cat. Wood, 2' 2" by 1' 5 1/2".

subject in the gallery of the Uffizi, at Florence. The panel has much of the delicacy which we find in Memling, and appears to have issued from that master's workshop; the wings are separated from the centre composition, and confirm the supposition that these panels are by Memling.<sup>1</sup> St. John the Baptist holding the Lamb, and St. John the Evangelist carrying the chalice, are replicas from the Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine at Bruges, or the altar-piece of Memling at Chiswick.

Amongst the pictures unnoticed by the authors is the Virgin giving the breast to the Infant Christ, in the late Pourtalès collection. The donor in armour on the left wing of the triptych, the donatrix on the right, are assigned to Porbus.<sup>2</sup>

The greater part of Hugo's works in Belgium were destroyed by the iconoclasts of the 16th century. His pictures in the church of Vasselære were burnt on the 4th of October, 1575.<sup>3</sup> Two panels with subjects from the legend of St. Catherine, once in the Carmelites of Ghent, are missing.<sup>4</sup> Four episodes from the Seven Sacraments, seen in the palace of Nassau at Brussels by Albert Dürer, and ascribed by him to "Meister Hugo", are also missing.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No. 10, second floor, second room, Belvedere Cat. Wood, 2' 2", together 4' 5 1/2", Austrian measure.

<sup>2</sup> Ex Pourtalès Collection in Paris. Wood, m. 0.81 square, sold for 1400 fr. at the sale in 1865.

<sup>3</sup> *Messenger des Sciences Historiques*. Gand. 1845. 8°. pp. 117-45.

<sup>4</sup> Værnewyk, u. s., p. 100. Van Mander, 204.

<sup>5</sup> Pinchart, annot., u. s., CCLXVI and following, and Reliquien, u. s., p. 90.

## CHAPTER VII.

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### JUSTUS OR JODOCUS OF GHENT.

APPARENTLY early records, which speak of Justus or Jodocus of Ghent, might seem to connect him with the teaching of Hubert Van Eyck, but that unhappily these records have no claim to any authenticity. Evidence of a different kind leads us to inquire whether towards the middle of the century Justus was induced by any circumstances to visit the Italian peninsula.<sup>1</sup>

In 1451, one Justus d'Allamagna lived and laboured in the Dominican convent of Santa Maria di Castello, at Genoa, and painted on the wall of its cloisters the Annunciation of the Virgin. Was this Justus d'Allamagna the same artist who produced pictures at Ghent? or was he a man of the same name who settled at Genoa for life? History is silent on this point, and we cannot gather from the signature of the picture of Santa Maria di Castello whether the

<sup>1</sup> "En Jodocus van Gent, discipel van Hubertus van Eyck, een tafereel verbeeldende St. Jans Onthoofdinge." Extract from Mr. Delbecq's manuscript, u. s.—*Passavant, Kunstreise*, p. 381. *De Bast, Mess. des Sci. et des Arts de Belgique*, 1824, p. 132. The authenticity of this MS. is, as we have seen, (antea in Van der Meire), contested. "Furono similmente de' primi ... maestro Martino e Giusto da Guanto, che fece la tavola della communione del Duca d'Urbino ed altre pitture."—*Vasari*, u. s. vol. i. Introd., C. VII. p. 163.—"Jodocus Gandavensis, pict. nobilissimus, Huberti Eyck discipulus."—*Sanderus*, u. s., *De Gand. Erud. Clar.* lib. II. fol. 79.

artist was a German or a Fleming; because the inscription—

“Justus d’Alla-  
-magna pinx-  
-it, 1451,”—

equally applies to the Netherlands and parts of the Rhine country, being called Alemania by the geographers of the period;<sup>1</sup> but the information withheld by history is of less moment, if from the examination of the picture itself we can guess at the country in which this Justus was educated.

The Annunciation in Santa Maria di Castello is painted on the side of the cloisters in which the Dominicans spend their leisure hours, and receives brilliant light from a window looking out on the sea. The sacred incident is divided into three irregular spaces, by two slight colonnets; it is laid within an apartment seen through a highly ornamented Gothic arch, with a lunette in which the figure of God the Father is placed. The Virgin, standing on the right in a pensive attitude, and seeming to listen, bends her head towards the angel; she wears a transparent veil, through which her yellow hair appears; a blue cloth gracefully falling over the ears is fastened at the neck, and opens out to show the hands delicately crossed at the bosom; then forming full and sweeping folds, it fills the foreground, and impinges on the central space.<sup>2</sup> The inner

<sup>1</sup> “Les Pays Bas portent encore le nom de Germanie inférieure ou Basse Allemagne.” Guicciardini, u. s., p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The whole work is about 9 f. 9 in. square, including the lunette which contains the representation of the Eternal. The Annunciation, taken alone, is 9 ft. 9 in. by 7 ft. 6 in. The whole picture is entirely under glass, for its better preservation; portions of it, such as the gold work of the dresses of the two principal figures, being partially effaced, and the blue of the Virgin’s dress darkened by age. The landscapes also have become slightly indistinct.



# THE ANNUNCIATION.

Mural Picture, by Justus d'Allamagna, in Santa Maria di Castello, at Genoa





dress, seen beneath the mantle fringed with golden embroidered letters, is of rich gold stuff; a painted receptacle of stone covered with a red cloth stands at the Virgin's side, and is filled with books; an arch of stones, alternately coloured black and white, opens behind, and golden rays dart upon the figure from the glory that surrounds the Eternal.

The announcing angel, dressed in a golden cope, with broad edges containing figures of the Apostles, occupies the central and left portion of the picture, and, kneeling at some distance back, holds out one hand, and grasps a delicate mace in the other; the inner dress of white falls in folds on a chequered brown and white floor, leaving bare the naked feet. In a recess a basin lies; above it hangs an ewer; a bird dips its beak into the water, and a lily in a vase stands on the window-sill. Three open arches allow us to see the distant hills in which there are faint traces of episodes of sacred history; similar particularities may be noticed in a landsape opening behind a window on the left; an orange-tree impedes a portion of the view; and on the frame of a high window is a small square card, on which the painter's name is inscribed.

The Eternal, looking down from the midst of the carved and fretted work that surrounds him, has the benignant aspect of age—silvery hair and beard; the colonnets which divide the picture are canopied in stone, and form niches on each side of the Eternal; in which there are small figures of saints.

There is much in this painting to lead to the conviction that Justus d'Allamagna was not taught by Hubert or John Van Eyck. The work is in some respects Flemish, but Flemish with an admixture of peculi-

arities marking the school of Cologne. The elements of comparison between the great Flemish pictures, executed in oil, and this in tempera on the wall, are wanting, and preclude the discussion of the question of colour; but looking at the smooth treatment, which hardly differs from that of a tempera on panel, and looking particularly at the form of smoothness which meets us here, we are necessarily led back to the school of Cologne, whose art work is marked as this is marked by nice blending of tints, clearness of lights, paleness of shadows, and want of *chiaro-scuro*.

The subject of the Annunciation, common to every school of the continent, offers small scope for remark. The general distribution of the composition, and its combination of groups with low arches, rich in carved ornament and detail, are more characteristic of the Rhenish school, than of that of Bruges. With respect to the figures; if they are executed with less mastery than those of the Flemings, they are distinguished by a softness peculiar to Rhenish craftsmen. The Madonna is placed in an attitude of considerable grace, and simply draped; the round outline and form of the head, the hair covered with a cloth, recall the Virgin of Stephen of Cologne.

The announcing angel, although more in the Flemish manner than the rest of the picture, has a cast of countenance different from that of the Van Eycks, and in some points resembling that of the Rhine painters, who also had the custom of gilding vestments.

But Flemish methods and inspirations may be traced with more certainty than elsewhere in the background of the composition, which, instead of being a golden surface, surrounded by architecture, is made to represent space and depth by depicting the interior of

an apartment, with windows looking out upon landscapes according to the Flemish fashion. The painter's knowledge of linear perspective is, unfortunately, slight.

We may conclude that Justus d'Allamagna was a man, partaking of the Flemish and Rhenish manners, and exhibiting the religious feeling of the latter, combined with the more material tendency of the former to imitate nature. He cannot have been a pupil of the Van Eycks, with whose pictures and method his mural painting has nothing in common; nor did he practise the technical methods of the Van Eycks.<sup>1</sup>

It is curious, however, that no other trace of this artist should be found at Genoa. There is a Genoese picture in the Louvre, divided into three parts—the centre representing the Annunciation, the wings, St. Benedict and St. Augustin, and St. Stephen and St. Angelo,<sup>2</sup> similar in character, as regards faces and figures, to that of Justus d'Allamagna; but the composition has not his calm religious feeling. The Virgin shrinks tremulously, and supports herself against a column, whilst the angel is represented in the air. The Virgin is dressed in a golden garment, covered with a black drapery; the types of the faces resemble those of the Annunciation at Genoa, and the background is an Italian landscape; the flesh tints are chalky grey, and so slightly shaded as to seem unfinished. This is a picture either by Justus d'Allamagna,

<sup>1</sup> Another painter, called Johannes Alamannus, painted with Antonio da Murano in 1445, and in 1446. He exhibits somewhat of the Rhenish manner in sentiment and in the nice blending of flesh tints, but especially in the architectural parts of his composition.

<sup>2</sup> No. 258, Louv. Cat. The central panel, met. 1. 56 by 1.07. The panels of the wings, met. 0. 98 by 0.48. This picture formed part of Louis the Eighteenth's Collection, and had been executed for an oratory at Genoa.

or by one of his pupils. The Flemish character is less visible on the wings, which are not by the same hand as the central panel.

Many painters of Germany, or of the Low Countries, at Genoa, in the fifteenth century, might be pointed to as authors of the panel of the Louvre. Padre Spotorno, who wrote the literary history of Liguria in 1824, published an interesting narrative of the early school of painting in Genoa. Amongst the men who migrated to Italy in the fifteenth century, was one Corrado d'Alemania, who lived at Taggia in 1477. Spotorno supposes, not improbably, that Corrado came to Italy with Justus d'Allamagna, and held a subordinate position in the workshop of that artist, as Memling did in that of Van der Weyden. It was in Taggia that Padre Domenico E. Maccari, and Lodovico Brea, of Nice, also lived; and Spotorno thought it not unlikely that these men, who exhibited Flemish tendencies in their works, might be pupils of Corrado d'Alemania. There was, he thought, some resemblance between the works of these masters. The only picture remaining of Maccari is at Taggia; and of Brea the first known work was painted in 1478. The foreign character of Brea's pictures was noticed by all who saw them; his composition, the attitude of his figures, the hardness of his design, and the angular nature of his draperies, his partiality to ornament, proclaimed a painter influenced by the Flemings. These characteristic features of his style may have been obtained from Corrado at Taggia, and Justus d'Allamagna at Genoa. Baldinucci and Lanzi, who notice Brea's foreign style, said that he founded the Genoese school; but Spotorno, who searched the records of Genoa, discovered the names of twenty-six artists



previous to Brea on the chronological register of the old painters of that city; one Oberto, having professed the art as far back as 1368. The influence of the Flemings at Genoa did not last; it ceased after Maccari and Brea; and Semino and Piaggio, pupils of Brea, abandoned his manner after they had seen the pictures of Carlo di Mantegna and Pier Francesco Sacchi.<sup>1</sup>

There is less of doubt to contend with in reference to Justus of Ghent whose altar-piece in Sant' Agata, at Urbino, was executed in 1468—70 for the brotherhood of Corpus Christi, and paid for by the subscriptions of Federico di Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino and others. The registers of the convent furnish full details as to the manner in which the subscriptions were raised and the money spent. Giovanni da Luca, or Zaccagna, contributed 33 florins and 22 bolognini; Gostino Santucci, three different amounts; the Duke of Urbino, 15 florins of gold. The remaining sums are not specified; but the expenses of the altar-piece are distinctly stated; 300 florins were paid for its production, and 40 florins 33½ bolognini for the gold leaf of the background.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Padre Spotorno (G. B.), *Storia Letteraria della Liguria*, 8vo. Genova, 1824—6.

<sup>2</sup> "1465. Marzo 31. Giovanni da Luca, altram. Zaccagna deve dare fiorini 33 e bol. 22. della promessa che fece per la tavola."

"1468. Tre partite pagate per l'elemosyna promessa per la tavola a conto di Battista (di Maestro Gostino Santucci Medico)."

"1474. Marzo 9. Fiorini 15 d'oro dati dal Conte Federico per aiuto della spesa della tavola a Guido Mengaccio per la fraternita."

"1474. Ottobre 25. Fiorini 40 e bologn. 33½, spesi in pezzi 4,700 d'oro battuto per la tavola."

"Adi dº Fiorini 300 . . A M<sup>stro</sup> Giusto da Guanto depintore per fiorini 250 d'oro a lui promessi per sua fatica per depingere la tavola della fraternita."

"Adi dº Fiorini 240 d'oro. Li d. sono per tanti che Guido di Mengaccio ha dato contanti a Maestro Giusto da Guanto depin-

The Duke of Urbino appears to have taken a special interest in the production of this work which was intended to illustrate a curious incident of his reign. Ussum Cassan, Shah of Persia, being desirous of assistance in a war against the Turks, sent to raise funds and troops amongst the people of the Italian States. Caterino Zeno, an agent of Venice in the East, was entrusted with this mission, and came in 1471 to Urbino to solicit the aid of the Duke of Montefeltro. Justus of Ghent was then commissioned to execute the altar-piece of the Corpus Domini; and Federico did honour to the ambassador by introducing him as a spectator in the Last Supper of Justus.<sup>1</sup> In 1474 the panel was completed, after which there is but one further record of the stay of Justus at Urbino; and that is an entry in the registers of the brotherhood of Corpus Christi, respecting a piece of canvas purchased for the making of a banner.<sup>2</sup>

The Last Supper of Sant' Agatha, having been removed from its original position, and suspended high up above a large picture on the great altar of the church, is not in such a satisfactory state of preservation, as to afford a perfect judgment of its merits.<sup>3</sup>

tore per la promessa gli fù fatta per depingere la tavola. Avemone el queto per mano di Ser Francesco di Pietro da Spelle, et anche è accesa la scripta tra noi e M<sup>tro</sup> Giusto, et è in mano di Giohanni di Luca perchè non fece el dovere, e da noi fu intieramente pagato a conto di Guido in questo a carte 73, Lire 600."—*Pungileoni (L.), Elogio Storico di Giovanni Santi*, 8vo. Urbino, 1822, pp. 64-6.

<sup>1</sup> Don Andrea Lazari, arciprete, "Compendio Storico Delle Chiese e delle pitture esistenti in esse," Urbino, 1801. *Pungileoni*, u. s., p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> "1475. Giugno . . . . E più tela a M<sup>tro</sup> Giusto depentore che diceva voler fare un insegna bella per la fraternita."—*Pungileoni*, u. s., p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Wood 10 feet square.

The Saviour, in long vestments, advances from the right to the centre of the foreground, and stoops to present the wafer of the host to the first of a line of apostles in prayer at the side of a long table; behind him, to the right those who have communicated kneel with grave and composed features. At the furthest end of the board, to the left, St. John Evangelist places a flask on the table; an apostle on his right holds a long taper, whilst Judas with the bag of gold retires through a door; an angel hovers above this portion of the picture. The communion table is separated from the rest of the church by a railing, behind which, to the right, the Duke Federico with two attendants,<sup>1</sup> seems to converse with the turbaned figure of Zeno, enforcing his words by placing a hand on the ambassador's shoulders. Zeno contemplates the scene with astonishment; a woman and child behind the Duke watch the incident from an opening; and an angel flies above the group; behind the apostles is the retreating pilastered wall of the church and a hanging lamp.

Justus of Ghent appears from this example of his manner to have been an industrious painter, of the Flemish school, without any claims to superiority over the numerous pupils of the Van Eycks. His composition is arranged with a certain method, but marred by the total absence of linear perspective; the figures of the Duke and ambassador being more distant, yet larger than those of the Saviour and apostles. The high centre of vision of the foreground gives an awkward look to the figures; but a certain depth of atmosphere in the background partially corrects this

<sup>1</sup> One of these attendants is supposed to be a portrait of Justus of Ghent.

defect. The type of the Saviour with his long straggling hair and bony form, and the features of the apostles are vulgar. The figures indeed are of fair proportions and varied in attitudes; but the contours are angular and hard; the feet and hands are ill drawn and the draperies, though free from excessive angularity, are meaningless, and rather conceal than develop the form. There are neither embroideries nor ornaments, but the naturalistic tendency of the painter is shown by the wine flask in a corner, and the jug and basin in which the apostles have washed themselves. The greater part of the altar-piece, and especially the foreground, is rubbed down; where the colour is best preserved a warm yellowish tint of a low key and thin surface prevails.

We are told by Vespasian that Frederick of Montefeltro "sent to Flanders for an artist especially skilled in the handling of oil colours, to whom he gave important commissions, causing his Duchess to sit for her likeness, and ordering him to decorate a library with pictures of philosophers, poets, and doctors of the church." The name of this artist is not mentioned; but the panels with which he filled the walls of the library of Urbino are preserved in the Barberini palace at Rome, and in the Campana gallery at the Louvre; and it seems natural that we should inquire whether Justus of Ghent who produced the last supper is identical with the Fleming who adorned the library. The last supper produces no other impression than that it was executed by a Netherlander free from contact with Italian guildsmen. The series "of poets, philosophers, and doctors" is not without transalpine feeling; it combines Flemish peculiarities of type and treatment with a flavour of Italian spirit. We may

concede that it was painted by Justus; but, if so, it must be supposed that Justus materially altered his manner by studying the works of such men as Giovanni Santi and Melozzo da Forlì. We know that Raphael copied the library series; and we thus trace Flemish influences at work in forming the style of the greatest of Italian craftsmen. Jealousy or disdain prompted the local annalists of Urbino to neglect the claims of Justus to historical recognition; and Giovanni Santi who wrote of Van Eyck and Van der Weyden, omitted to name the only Fleming who laboured at Urbino. It is only fair that modern criticism should expose the prejudices of earlier ages.<sup>1</sup>

The pictures finished by Justus for the church of St. Jacques at Ghent—the Crucifixion of St. Peter, and the Beheading of St. Paul—were still preserved in 1763, when Mensært wrote his “*Peintre amateur*,”<sup>2</sup> they have since disappeared.

Justus is not the author of the “Discovery of the Cross,” in the collection of the late Mr. Huyvetter of Ghent; nor is he the painter of the panels assigned to him in the Antwerp Gallery.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Vespasiano dé Bisticci's life of Frederick of Montefeltro in Mai's “*Lives*” published at Rome in 1839. The Louvre series of 15 panels is in that portion of the collection called Musée Napoléon III., Nos. 263 to 276; the panels varying in size from m. 1.16, to 0.90 in height and from 0.55 to 0.76 in breadth. Consult the History of Painting in Italy, by the authors. Vol. II. 563, and Reiset in Notice des tableaux du Musée Napoléon III. 80. Paris, 1866.

<sup>2</sup> Mensært. *Le peintre amateur et curieux*. 80. Bruxelles, 1763. II. p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Antwerp Mus. No. 223. The Nativity. No. 224. The Benediction.



## CHAPTER VIII.

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### ROGER VAN DER WEYDEN.

OF the two schools into which Flemish art was divided in the first half of the 15th century, that which claimed and held preeminence was founded by the Van Eycks, but that which exercised paramount influence on the later painters of Germany and the Netherlands was headed by Roger Van der Weyden.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst every sign guides us to the Eastern border of Belgium as the cradle of the Van Eycks, there is evidence that Van der Weyden took the first lessons of his craft in the West of Flanders; and we thus have to acknowledge the existence of two currents of pictorial teaching, one of which took its rise in the valley of the Mæs, the other in the valley of the Schelde.

Roger, the son of Henri Van der Weyden, was born in 1400 at Tournai, a city venerable for its antiquity and traditions, respected as one of the larger municipalities of Belgium, and rich in monuments of architecture.<sup>2</sup> Tournai was one of the places in which tinted sculpture was commonly produced in the 14th

<sup>1</sup> Roger van der Weyden is not to be confounded with Roegere van Bruesele who was free of the Guild of Ghent in 1414, and whose name appears in records of 1410—15. This Roger is probably Roger van der Woestine, a painter of Ghent whose works are missing. See de Busscher, *Recherches*, pp. 51—55. 132. 141, and Ruelens, *Notes et Additions u. s. CXXVII.*

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Pinchart has found dated records in which the painter's name, age, and family are given. See the reference in the

century;<sup>1</sup> and we have seen how stone carving formed part of the decorative portion of canvases assigned to craftsmen of that city. The same peculiarity meets us in Van der Weyden, and affords one of the most remarkable instances of the power with which sculpture under certain aspects may react on painting.

It was observed long since that the form of Van der Weyden's art, and the clearness of bloom in his pigments, pointed to a school different from that of Van Eyck;<sup>2</sup> but historical testimony was so strong in favour of assuming that Roger Van der Weyden was John Van Eyck's disciple that new evidence was required to enable us to demur to the old. That evidence we now possess, and it allows us to state that Roger Van der Weyden was not only born but bred at Tournai; that he was apprenticed to a local and otherwise unknown master, called Robert Campin, in 1426, and made free of his guild in 1432. That he very speedily rose in public consideration after this is proved by the fact that, in 1436, he was painter in ordinary to the city of Brussels.<sup>3</sup>

catalogue of the Brussels Museum by E. Fetis, p. 164, and the *Journal des Beaux Arts* for 1863, p. 63. We have seen neither the records nor a copy of them.

<sup>1</sup> Notes from the archives of Tournai, already quoted in chap. I, from De Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, I. LXIV.

<sup>2</sup> See the first edition of this work, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> As early as 1449, Cyriacus (in Colucci: *Antichità Picene*. Tom XV., p. 143) noticed Roger of Brussels as second in rank to John Van Eyck. A few years later Facio (*De viris*, u. s. pp. 48-9) spoke of the samemaster as Van Eyck's pupil. After Facio's error had been copied by Vasari, (I. 163 and IV. 76) Guicciardini, (u. s. 123-4) visited the Low Countries, and was enabled to state that Roger van der Weiden of Brussels succeeded to the reputation "of the Van Eicks." Upon this Vasari transferred the same statement without comment to the last volume of the second edition of his *Lives*, (XIII. 148), and thus had the misfortune to mislead Van Mander (pp. 203 and 207), who copied him throughout and registered two persons under the names of Roger of Bruges

We shall observe, after scanning the whole of the works of Van der Weyden, that they realize an order of religious thought differing somewhat from that of the Van Eycks. The Van Eycks illustrate the splendour of the church militant, or they fondly depict the placid joys of the Virgin, the smiles of the Infant Christ, and the serene pensiveness of saints; Van der Weyden likes to dwell on the gloomy aspects of sacred history; he prefers the pages in which we read of the agony and pains of the Saviour and the Martyrs.

In Van der Weyden's mind gorgeous beauties of colour have no charm. He may have felt the vibrations of true harmonies; he may have known the technical value of contrasts, but he had no feeling for

and Roger Van der Weyden of Brussels. The doubts and difficulties created by this accident received unwelcome complication when it appeared that Molanus, an author of the 16th century (*History of Louvain cit. in Ruelens, Notes et Additions*), had described pictures at Louvain as being executed by Master Roger "civis et pictor Lovaniensis". They were still further increased by the discovery that the freedom of the guild of Ghent had been taken in 1414 by "Rogier of Brusele;" (*Guild of Ghent in de Busscher, Recherches, u. s., p. 200*); they culminated when it was found that Rogelet de le Pasture or Van der Weyden had been articulated and had risen to the freedom of his trade in 1426 and 1432 at Tournai. (A. Wauters, "Roger Van der Weyden," in *Revue Universelle des Arts*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Paris and Bruxelles. 1855. Tome II. p. 12). It was the good fortune of Mr. A. Pinchart to take us out of the dilemma of contradictory statements by proving with authority that the celebrated painter, called by some Roger of Bruges, by others Roger of Brussels, is no other than Roger de le Pasture or Van der Weyden of Tournai, who was apprenticed to Robert Campin of Tournai in 1426, who matriculated in the guild of St. Luke at Tournai in 1432, was city painter at Brussels in 1436, and was honoured with masses at Tournai when he died at Brussels in 1464; and it is only necessary as an interesting part of the evidence to give the following (*Annotations, u. s., CCVI—VII*): "Archives communales de Tournai. Comptes annuels du métier des peintres et verriers, anno 1463—4. "Item payet pour les chandelles qui furent mises devant St. Luc, à cauze du service maistre Rogier de le Pasture, natyf de cheste ville de Tournay, lequel demoroit à Brousselles, pour ce: iiij gros 1/2."

the richness of tints or the glow of warmly lighted scenes; he must have seen the brilliant pictures of the Van Eycks, yet looked upon them as exotics worthy of admiration rather than imitation. The sun for him seems never to have shone, but in early hours; for the clear morning light under which he presents all objects is the twilight before sunrise; a light which, with impartial kindness, illumines the innermost recesses of an apartment, the still current of a river, the crags on its banks, the towers on its slopes, or the distant snow mountains on its horizon; he had a solid aversion to broad contrasts of chiaroscuro. Whilst he eschewed effect as a means of producing pictorial illusion, he carried minuteness and finish to such a point that his pictures bear the closest inspection; he sacrificed almost every thing to perfection of detail; he may at times have given life and expression to a face exceptionally noble in type and features, he may occasionally have caught an attitude or gesture; habitually he fell into the convenient faults of gaze, rigidity and moroseness. It may be doubted whether he ever appreciated the value of a smile, for he never gave to his Virgins or saints any thing more than soft and solemn gravity; large eyes are emblematic of deep thought; broad protuberances of forehead, and an extraordinary development of head, are typical of intellect and superhuman power; convulsed features represent grief; attenuated frames, long suffering; and a portly person, the fit enjoyment of the good things of this world.

At rare intervals Van der Weyden succeeded in designing draperies free from excessive angularity, but in general he fell into the common failing of all Flemish painters and delighted in mazes of broken folds, the

formality of which generally added to the disagreeable effect of figures already marked by a certain fixity of attitude. In the rendering of nude he was careful, but not invariably perfect; it is not rare to find parts of the same figure well and ably wrought, others the reverse; or to be repelled by clumsy and ill drawn feet and hands. Van der Weyden had a fair knowledge of anatomy and a correct appreciation of form, without the taste to idealize it; those who have seen the graceful Infants of Italian painters will hardly bear with the coarse stiff doll which generally satisfied their Flemish contemporary.

The uniform lightness which marks Van der Weyden's panels suggests a long habit of painting in tempera. The pains which he took to model flesh with delicacy are highly commendable; his colours though pale, are invariably blended to a nicety, which is the more remarkable as they are of substantial impast. Nothing is more curious than the contrast between the soft fused flesh tones and the patience with which hair and beard are worked out; conscientiousness of detail is carried so far that the most distant and the nearest portions of a landscape are finished with equal minuteness, producing a total absence of atmosphere. A strange peculiarity marks the foregrounds; the figures are made to rest on a barren rocky surface, in the interstices of which a hardy plant at times crops out, the leaves and stems of which are painted with exaggerated care.

In his early days, perhaps, a tinter of stone, Van der Weyden was partial to architectural ornaments, on which he lavished time and trouble without imparting to them that warmth of glow and perfection of relief which are so conspicuous in John Van Eyck. In



the art of linear perspective he was almost totally deficient.

Chary of ornament, he never overlaid draperies with embroidery and precious stones, but faithful to the system of reproducing what he saw, he accurately copied the monstrosities of costume which prevailed in his time. It was during his life that singularity of dress was carried to its most extravagant height. Fops wore shoes so pointed that the extremities were tied to the legs for fear they should trip up the wearer; sumptuary laws regulated the dress of people in different classes, and the noble was habitually distinguished by silk and gold apparel; men could not walk in the streets without wooden pattens. It was one of the objects of the puritan party at Brussels, in Van der Weyden's time, to reform the absurdities of costume so common in the 15th century; but the failure of its efforts might be deduced from the fact that, when Van der Weyden depicted the Kings of the East making offerings to the Saviour, he found no dress more characteristic than that of the noblemen of his day.

It is a fair subject of inquiry how it happened that Van der Weyden rose to the high position which he undoubtedly occupied in the esteem of his contemporaries and successors. The answer will be that it was because he appealed to a feeling in the human breast which generally breeds sympathy, and that he delighted to depict subjects in which the sentiment of the masses was naturally enlisted. He was more indebted for the honour he received to the peculiar religious subjects which he chose, than to the perfection of his painting; and it is matter for serious thought that an artist who did not approach to the excellence of the Van Eycks should have been more extensively known and have

exercised a greater influence than any other master of the Netherlands, that Germany should owe to him some of the elements which combined to produce the talents of Schön and Dürer,<sup>1</sup> that Bruges should owe to him its Memling and Louvain its Dierick Bouts, that the school of Cologne should have derived from him a new character; and that the mixture of the three should have found its incarnation in Quintin Massys, the only original artist of Antwerp in the 16th century.

If we give credit to a passage in a Chronicle of the Carthusians of Enghien, Roger Van der Weyden was a married man before he was an apprentice; and we may suppose that he gave up some earlier profession for that in which he finally became famous.<sup>2</sup>

In 1436 the municipality of Brussels came to a public decision which materially helps to settle the chronology of his life; it was recorded in a public ordinance of the 2d of May "that after the death of Master Roger the office of town painter should be suppressed."<sup>3</sup> This leads us to the necessary conclusion that after Van der Weyden took the freedom of his guild at Tournai in

<sup>1</sup> See Lambert Lombard to Vasari, April 27, 1565, in Gaye, Carteggio. Vol. III. pp. 176—7.

<sup>2</sup> "Anno eodem (1473) obiit in Octobri . . . dominus Cornelius de Pascuis de Bruxellâ, filius magistri Rogerii de Pascuis egregii illius pictoris. Iste fuit hic monachus professus *circiter* viginti quatuor annis. . . . Hic juvenis obiit circiter quadraginta octo annorum et ex parte ejus domûs hæc à patri et matre ipsius habuit plusquàm quadringenta coronas." Chronicon domus capellæ ordinis Carthusiensis juxta Angiam fo. 41. ap. A. Wauters. Roger Van der weyden; u. s. Revue Univ. des Arts. Tom. II. 1855. p. 11. Yet the word *circiter* should make us cautious; but it is certain, at all events, that Corneille van der Weyden was born before 1435; Mr. A. Pinchart having found several records of that date at Tournai in which mention is made of Roger, his wife Elizabeth Goffaerts and his children Corneille and Marguerite. Two more children, Pierre and Jean, were born in the next following three years. See Journal des Beaux Arts, 1863, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> A. Wauters, in Revue Universelle, u. s. 1855. II. p. 14.

1432, he wandered to Brussels where, previous to 1436 he was made a citizen, and appointed painter to the city. Certain sumptuary privileges, we are now aware, were connected with this office. As town painter Van der Weyden was furnished with cloth of a certain fineness, and allowed to hang his cloak on the right shoulder; his dignity was below that of a surgeon; his perquisites were higher than those of an architect.<sup>1</sup>

At some period not exactly to be traced Van der Weyden was called upon to paint for the town hall of Brussels four canvases celebrated in the pages of the oldest stories of travel; described by Sweert in the *Monumenta*, by Calvete de Estrella in the "Happy Journey of King Philip," noticed by Dürer in his visit to the Netherlands, lost in the bombardment of Brussels in 1695,<sup>2</sup> but fortunately reproduced in the arras which still adorns the cathedral of Berne.<sup>3</sup> On one canvas Trajan was depicted delivering one of his captains to the executioner at the prayer of a widow who charged the captain with killing her only son; a second showed Gregory the Great on his knees before the altar of St. Peter, it also represented him receiving the head of Trajan with its tongue in perfect preservation; a third displayed the Judge Herkenbald decapitating his nephew who had ravished a maiden's honour; a fourth the miraculous descent of the holy

<sup>1</sup> Roger, besides, to have a "derdendeel" of cloth. Ordinance of about 1440, in A. Wauters, *Messenger des sciences historiques*, u. s., anno 1846. p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Sweertius. *Monumenta*, u. s., pp. 309—11, Calvete de Estrella. *El felicissimo viãge, del Rei Felipe*. fol. p. 92. Dürer, *Reliquien*. ed. Campe, u. s., p. 88. A. Pinchart, *Bulletins de l'Acad. de Brux. Sér. 2. Tom XVII, no. 1. Anno 1864. Article called R. v. d. W. et les Tapisseries de Berne*.

<sup>3</sup> See on this Pinchart's *R. v. d. Weyden et les tapisseries de Berne*, u. s., Kinkel's *Die Brüsseler Rathhausbilder und deren Copien in den Burgundischen Tapeten*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Zürich, 1867.

wafer into Herkenbald's mouth after a bishop had refused him the sacraments.<sup>1</sup>

During the years immediately preceding the appointment of Van der Weyden, great changes had taken place in the administration of the municipality of Brussels. A party of puritans had come into office; and it was apparently desirable to symbolize some of the virtues for which the leaders strove by pictorial representation. Enactments in this sense had previously been made. Justice was no longer to be contaminated by the sale of verdicts. Religious communities were to be reformed; and to this end numerous edicts were issued against gambling and adultery. Singing was forbidden in houses and streets, and married men living in concubinage were rendered liable to lose what offices they might then hold, and be for ever excluded from employment and the prerogatives of the city.<sup>2</sup>

That Van der Weyden, before he came to Brussels, should have painted altar-pieces and panels is natural to suppose; that his leisure time at Brussels was devoted to similar occupations is more than probable.

The first pictures of which we have cause to know the approximate date, are those which make up a triptych in the Museum of Berlin representing the nativity, the dead Saviour, and Christ appearing to Mary after the Resurrection. They were given to the Carthusians of Miraflores by John the III<sup>d</sup> king of

<sup>1</sup> Consult the authors cited in the previous note but one. It was long the fashion to reproduce these subjects in arras. Besides the cloths at Berne, there is one representing the legend of Herkenbald in St. Pierre at Louvain; it was made from a cartoon by Philip van Orley in 1513. See van Even's *Louvain Monumental*. fol. Louv. 1860, p. 180—1.

<sup>2</sup> Wauters. *Revue Universelle des Arts*, also *Henne et Wauters. Histoire de Bruxelles*. Vol. 1, p. 227.

Spain in 1445, and are described in the books of the monastery as painted "by the great and famous Fleming Magistro Rogel."<sup>1</sup> The chief panel of this remarkable triptych displays one of those scenes of mournful interest in the composition of which Van der Weyden seems to have followed the bent of a natural inclination. The stiff attitude of the figures, the rigid character of the outlines, and the angular appearance of the draperies reveal undeveloped power; the laborious minuteness of architectural ornaments in the Gothic arches which surround each scene proves that the earliest quality of Van der Weyden was conscientious detail, whilst tinting given to the ornaments themselves, and the presence of angels dyed in pink and blue might betray his early occupation as a colourist of stone, and almost suggest that in his youth he painted miniatures. The central panel is what Van der Weyden's contemporaries called "*ung Dieu de pitié*;" it is a melancholy representation of the Saviour removed in a lifeless and emaciated state from the cross, and lying at full length in the arms of the Virgin, who leans over him in tears and overwhelmed with grief. Joseph of Arimathea and

<sup>1</sup> Berlin Mus. No. 534<sup>a</sup>. Wood. Each panel 2 f. 3½ h. by 1 f. 4½. This altar-piece is said, we know not on what authority, to have been presented by Martin the Vth to king Juan the II of Spain. Ponz, *Viage d'España*. 8°. Madrid, 1783. Vol. 12. p. 58. quotes the following respecting it; being an extract from the books of the monastery of Miraflores near Burgos: "*Anno MCCCCXLV donavit prædictus rex (D. Juan II) pretiosissimum et devotum oratorium tres historias habens: nativitatem scilicet Jesu Christi, descensionem ipsius de cruce quæ alias quinta angustia nuncupatur, et apparitionem ejusdem ad matrem post resurrectionem. Hoc oratorium a magistro Rogel magno et famoso flandresco fuit depinctum [De libro del Becerro del monasterio].*" The triptych, No. 17, called Memling, in the collection of William the II of Holland, was taken from Miraflores by general d'Armagnac. It was sold to the Berlin Museum for 6000 florins; it has been injured by restoring.



St. John Evangelist stand by in attitudes, and with expressions, of mournful sympathy; a violet coloured angel floats in air amongst the confused mazes of parti-coloured ornament with which the Gothic arch above the scene is overladen; a landscape is seen in the distance, as sunless and melancholy as the principal figures. The body of the Saviour is livid<sup>1</sup> and stiff; on the face may be traced all the agonies inflicted successively by pain, exposure, and starvation. It is the semblance of a dead man, and in no sense divine, yet we can to a certain extent conceive how such a representation might excite the pity of the uneducated. The horizon of the figures and that of the landscape are different, the latter being represented on a level with the plane, on which the painter stands, and the landscape seen from an eminence; nor is there atmosphere to supply the place of linear perspective.

In the side panel to the left, Joseph is represented asleep on a seat, whilst the Virgin sits in front of a dais of gold brocade, and holds in her lap a large-headed Infant Saviour; the Virgin wears a very light blue dress; through the Gothic arch above her, a blue angel hovers in air.

The side panel to the right shows us the Saviour appearing to Mary, and the Resurrection; through the archivolt a blue angel flies. The character of the scenes depicted in the two side panels is similar to that of the central one; the niches of the arches are filled with statues of saints and incidents from the life of the Virgin Mary.

<sup>1</sup> Artists seem to have had no choice in this matter. It is distinctly stipulated in a contract of Saladin de Scœnere (1334) that the Saviour at the cross shall be painted with good flesh colour and like a dead man—"Comme un mort." De Busscher gives the contract, in *Recherches*, u. s., p. 28.

Early as the date of this triptych seems to be when compared with others executed during a long course of years by Van der Weyden, it is by no means a solitary example of its kind; and we must attribute to the same period and probably to the same year the two replicas of an oratory representing scenes from the life of the Baptist in the Museums of Berlin and Frankfort. In both we observe a melancholy calm, and a serene clearness of atmosphere very like those which mark the altar-piece of Miraflores. In both, form and perspective are faulty; and the subjects are set in pointed arches adorned with statuettes.<sup>1</sup>

Van der Weyden at this time kept a regular atelier for painters' work of all kinds at Brussels. In 1439, Philip the Good ordered a piece of carved work for the church of the Récollets, at Brussels, representing the Virgin and two princesses of Brabant, Mary, wife of John III., and her daughter, Mary, Duchess of Guelders. Roger Van der Weyden was ordered to colour these sculptures, and charged for doing so the sum of forty ridders of fifty gros of Flanders. For the additional sum of six livres, he painted the arms of the Duke Philip and the Duchess on the wooden doors, or wings, which protected the sculptures.<sup>2</sup>

On the walls of the Chapel of St. Agatha in St. Pierre of Louvain there hangs a triptych representing

<sup>1</sup> No. 534B. Berlin Mus. Wood. Each panel 2 f. 5 $\frac{3}{4}$  h. by 1 f. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ . This is a series of three panels in one frame. In the centre is the Baptism of Christ, to the l. the birth of John and his presentation to Zachariah; to the r. the Decollation. The replica at Frankfort, No. 67, is smaller, each panel being wood, 1 f. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  h. by 0 f. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ . The Birth and Baptism at Berlin were bought as Memlings at the sale of the collection of king William III of Holland; the Decollation was purchased in London. The Frankfort altar-piece was found in Lombardy.

<sup>2</sup> A. Wauters, in *Revue Universelle des Arts*. Tom. II. p. 23.

a descent from the cross on gold ground. Simon of Cyrene stands on a ladder leaning on the cross, and, with the help of Joseph of Arimathea, who grasps the frame under the armpits and Nicodemus who supports the legs, lowers the body of Christ to the ground. To the left St. Mary Magdalen wrings her hands, to the right, the Virgin faints into the arms of the Marys; two or three other figures complete the composition. The left wing contains the portraits of the donor, and his two sons recommended by St. James, the right, portraits of the patroness with two daughters and St. Elizabeth; the coats of arms in the upper part of the wings are those of the family of Edelheer, and tell us that the patrons are Jacques and Elizabeth Edelheer and their children.<sup>1</sup> On the outer sides of the wings are the Trinity and the Virgin supported by St. John; and beneath the second of these subjects is the following inscription recently recovered from superposed paint:

“Dese tafel heeft verree[r]t heñ Willē Edelhee en  
Alyt Syn Werdinne int jaer ons heñ MCCCC? en  
XLIII.”

Which means: “This picture was presented by Willem Edelheer and Alyt his wife in 1443.”<sup>2</sup>

On the testimony of this inscription it has been assumed that the altar-piece was painted in or before the year 1443, and the name of the painter has been sought in the following passages from Molanus's *Ms. History of Louvain*.

“Wilhelm Edelheer, Aleida his wife, and Wilhelmus their son, founded in 1443, at the altar of the Holy Spirit, the chapel of St. James the elder... Wilhelmus

<sup>1</sup> Divaeus. *Rer. Lov.* in E. van Even's *Monographie de St. Pierre de Louvain*, folio. Louvain, 1858, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. Piot in *Beffroi*. I. p. 103.

Edelheer, first rector of the chapel, by will dated 1473, founded a second chapel. Master Roger, citizen, and painter of Louvain, painted the Edelheer altar at St. Pierre of Louvain."<sup>1</sup> In other words:

The Edelheer chapel was founded by Willem Edelheer in 1443; Roger Van der Weyden painted in the Edelheer chapel; a picture exists in St. Pierre of Louvain; *ergo* the altar-piece now in St. Pierre is by Roger Van der Weyden.<sup>2</sup> Nothing can be more fallacious. There is little in this triptych to carry us back to the middle of the 15th century, much on the contrary to betray the hand of a feeble artist of the close of that century, whose want of skill and feeling is shown in dull immobility of masks, in the gaze of staring eyes, in hard and wiry contour, in harsh and dusky colour, and shadeless modelling. The altar-piece purports to have been presented by Willem and Alyt Edelheer in 1443, yet it contains the likenesses of James and Elizabeth Edelheer, the first of whom died in 1479, and the second in 1487.<sup>3</sup> We cannot doubt for a moment that the inscription has been misread or tampered with; and it is equally certain that the picture is a comparatively modern adaptation of one by Roger Van der Weyden, which was frequently repeated.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Piot in Le Beffroi. I. 111.

<sup>2</sup> The Edelheer Chapel is now "Chapelle de St. Aubert." Van Even. Monographie, u. s., 43.

<sup>3</sup> E. van Even. Monographie, u. s., p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> See postea. A writer in the Beffroi (? Weale) holds the authorship of Van der Weyden, on the grounds above given to be proved (I. 111). Mr. Michiels in the Gazette des Beaux Arts. Vol. XXI. falls into the same mistake; and the late Dr. Waagen (Jahrbücher für Kunstwissenschaft. 8<sup>o</sup>. Leipzig, 1868. H. I. p. 44,) does the same. It is to be observed that the picture is not one originally painted for St. Pierre of Louvain. It is a recent purchase (Wauters, Revue Universelle, u. s., II. 167)

We are informed by almost contemporary chroniclers that at some period of his life Van der Weyden thought it worth while to purchase the freedom of the city of Louvain, and paint pictures there.<sup>1</sup> Two altar-pieces are specially mentioned; one adorning the Edelheer altar in the church of St. Pierre, which if it be the same that is now shown is not original, another in Notre Dame hors les murs, which was bought and sent to Spain by Mary of Hungary.<sup>2</sup> It is related of the second of these pieces which represented the Descent from the Cross that, after it had been copied by Coxie, it was stowed on board of a ship which foundered at sea, and was saved after it had floated ashore. This descent of the Cross was, of all Van der Weyden's compositions that which met with most favour, and was most frequently imitated; it may indeed have been repeated more than once in the master's own atelier. Of all the replicas which are known at present to exist one is strongly impressed with the stamp of originality and hangs in the Museum of Madrid.<sup>3</sup> The body of the Saviour is being let down from the cross by Simon of Cyrene, into the arms of Nicodemus and

and may turn out to be a copy by Coxie of the altar-piece executed by Van der Weyden for Notre Dame hors les Murs at Louvain.

<sup>1</sup> Molanus, (in Hist. Lov. MS. u. s., lib. 10, f. 167), says: "Magister Rogerius, civis et pictor Lovaniensis, depinxit Lovanii, ad S. Petrum altare Edeleer et in capellâ beatæ Mariæ, summum altare, quod opus Maria Regina à sagittariis impetravit, et in Hispania vehi curavit, quamquam in mari periisse dicatur, et ejus loco dedit capellæ quingentorum florenorum organa et novum altare ad exemplar Roggerii expressum, opera Michaelis Coxenii Mechliniensis, sui pictoris."

<sup>2</sup> Van Mander, u. s., 207, and Opmeer, u. s. The chapel of Notre Dame hors les Murs in the Rue de Tirlemont at Louvain was built in 1364 and demolished in 1798. See Louvain Monumental 4<sup>o</sup>. Louvain 1860, by E. van Even, p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> No. 1046, Madrid Mus. Cat. 1858. 7f. 2in. high by 9f. 5in. Wood, gilt ground.



Joseph of Arimathea; Mary Magdalen looks on and wrings her hands with the wildest signs of grief; Van der Weyden here exhibiting his peculiarity of exaggerating pain and joy by unnatural action; near her is St. Peter, the Virgin swooning at his feet, and the third Mary, with other saints, close by. The figures of nature's size, exhibit in a proportionate degree Van der Weyden's tendency to hard outline, lean form, and lack of dignified feeling; the Saviour's head is fine, but the group of Mary swooning and the figures round her are the chief attraction,—the blooming flesh tints and harmonious colour contrasting with the livid hues of the crucified body. One of the replicas is in the Escorial,<sup>1</sup> under the name of Albert Dürer, but painted by one of Roger's pupils, grey in tone and harder of line than the original. Another in the Santa Trinita Museum of Madrid, by a stranger to the Flemish school, lacks all grace or charm of colour, and is heavy, dark, and red. A fourth in the Berlin Museum has suffered much from cleaning and restoring, but is an old copy.<sup>2</sup> A triptych, the central portion of which exhibits features not dissimilar from those of the Descent from the Cross of Berlin—such as the composition, grouping, and attitude of the figures—is in the Liverpool Gallery.<sup>3</sup> A sixth, diminutive in size, is still, as we have seen, in the cathedral of Louvain. For half a century the subject was repeated in all the schools

<sup>1</sup> No. 3. Hist. y descr. del Escorial. D. Jos. Quevedo. Madrid, 1849, p. 288. Of this picture Florent Le Comte relates that it was taken to the Escorial by Philip the II. (II. p. 202).

<sup>2</sup> No. 534, Berlin Cat. given to "Roger v. d. Weyden der jüngere, 1529." Dated 1488. Wood, 4 f. 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> z. high by 8 f. 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> z. broad.

<sup>3</sup> No. 39, Liverpool Gall. Cat. Wood, 2 f. 2. and each wing 9 inches wide. On the wings St. Julian and St. John the Baptist. Ascribed to Roger v. der Weyden the younger.

of Germany and Holland; and taste, as usual, becoming slave to fashion, the groups were reproduced and changed *ad infinitum*. A curious instance of exaggerated imitation is the triptych in the Cologne Museum, dated 1480, attributed by some to Israel van Meckenem, and by others to Albert van Ouwater, but really by an artist of the Rhenish school who shows that he had the trick of Flemish colour, but not the skill of Van der Weyden.<sup>1</sup>

The largest and most important commission which Van der Weyden executed before 1450, is that entrusted to him by Rollin, Chancellor of the Duchy of Burgundy, whose likeness we saw so beautifully painted by John Van Eyck for a church at Autun. Rollin had obtained a bull from Eugenius the IVth to build a hospital at Beaune. The first stone of this edifice was laid in 1443; and it is probable on several grounds that the picture was finished in 1447. Gandelot's history of Beaune relates that the bull of Eugenius which authorized the erection of the building under the invocation of St. Anthony was quashed by a bull of Nicholas the Vth (1447—55), who ordered it to be consecrated under the invocation of the Baptist. The presence of Eugenius the IVth and St. Anthony in the picture may be accepted as proving that it was finished before the accession of Nicholas the Vth.<sup>2</sup> As at Saint Bavon so at Beaune the subject is spread over nine panels, six of which cover the three central ones.<sup>3</sup> In the centre of the highest panel Christ sits

<sup>1</sup> Cologne. Wallraf-Richartz Mus. No. 127. Now assigned to the master of the Lyversberg Passion.

<sup>2</sup> Gandelot. (L'Abbé) Histoire de la ville de Beaune. 4<sup>o</sup>. Dijon, 1772. p. 111.

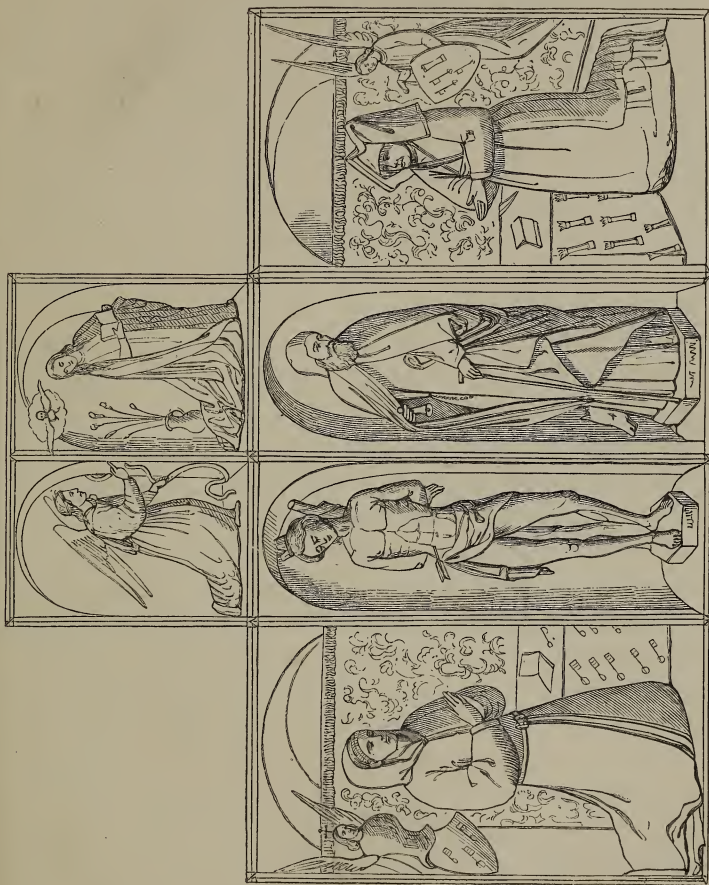
<sup>3</sup> Beaune Hospital. Wood, in its totality about 18 feet broad and seven to eight feet high. Much injured by abrasion and by



THE LAST JUDGMENT.

Interior of the Altar-piece by Roger Van der Weyden, in the Hospital of Beaune.





Exterior of Altar-piece by Roger Van der Weyden, in the Hospital of Beaune.





on a rainbow, with his feet on the orb and angels beneath him sounding the last trump; in two small compartments on a level with his seat are four angels carrying the emblems of the passion; lower down to the right and left, the apostles, headed by the Virgin and Baptist with Philip the Good, Eugenius the IVth, Jean Rollin, bishop of Autun, and Isabella of Portugal, and beneath them the figures of the accursed and blest rising from their graves, parted from each other by St. Michael, who weighs their souls in a balance; in the extremes are the gates of Paradise and the abode of Satan.

The composition of the central panel is the most faulty portion of the picture, the glory and the foreground being crowded together, instead of being properly parted; but the distribution of the saints in glory is extremely good; the lines are agreeable and in perspective, the figures well grouped together, and animated in motion. The choice of expression in the various faces of the saints shows a good perception and command of character. St. Peter is grand and energetic, the Madonna full of affectionate and motherly feeling; and St. John, with those accompanying him, is amongst the finest of the school, the attitudes being far more bold than are usually found in Flemish creations.

The harmony of the colours of the vestments is vigorous and true; and the folds are not so angular as in other pictures of the master. Although the form of Christ is not excellent, it recalls most forcibly to

attempts made to conceal the nudities of some figures with superposed colour. Some writers, ex. gr., Michiels in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*. Tom. XXI. p. 209, assign this altar-piece to John Van Eyck!

mind the representations of the same subject by John Van Eyck.

On the outer wings are represented the donors and the guardian saints of the building in monochrome; St. Sebastian, long and thin, exaggerated in motion, as usual with Van der Weyden, but executed with the utmost care and diligence; St. Anthony, with his bell and pig, one of the noblest creations of the Flemish school.

The portraits of Rollin and his wife are splendid studies of reality, without flattery or idealism. But, in comparing Rollin at Beaune with Rollin in the Louvre, the energetic financier of John Van Eyck's picture seems much older, and less grand in attitude. The comparison also serves to show the difference which existed between the modes of colouring used by the two painters.

At the period when this picture was completed we may presume that Van der Weyden also finished for a member of the Flemish family of Bracque a triptych with half lengths now belonging to the Marquis of Westminster. Surrounded by an old oaken frame, and covered with ancient scriptural inscriptions, it seems to have been a votive picture destined to adorn a sepulchral monument.<sup>1</sup> The outer surface of the triptych contains a wooden cross, with the words, "O mors quam amara est memoria tua hom̃. injusto et pacẽ habenti in substãciis suis, viro quieto et cujus vitæ directæ sunt in om̃ibus et adhuc valenti accipere cibũ. Eccl.xli." Above the cross is a scutcheon and the motto, "Bracque et Brabant." A large skull is also represented, with the epitaph of the person commemorated.

<sup>1</sup> A votive picture of this sort is described in the Life of Van der Goes. Vide sup., p. 139.

This epitaph, to the following effect, reminds us of that of Hubert Van Eyck. It is written in French:—

“Mirez vous ci orgueilleux et avers  
Mon corps fu beaux ore est viande a . . .”

The rest of the words, probably “aux vers,” are obliterated by time.

The funereal and solemn tenor of these inscriptions is reflected in the picture itself. In the centre of the triptych, surrounded by a halo, merging from red into yellow, the Saviour holds a brazen ball and cross, emblematic of universal rule; the Virgin, with hands joined in prayer, looks towards him on the left, and the Evangelist, holding the chalice, contemplates him on the right. On the wing, near the Evangelist, is Mary Magdalen; on that near the Virgin is St. John the Baptist. The Saviour, in a dark-brown habit, holds up his right hand, and extends his two fingers in the act of blessing. Long hair, parted in the centre, falls upon his shoulders, encircling, with a small and double-pointed beard, a dark-toned face, full of heavy muscular developments, broad overhanging cheeks, eyes so immovable as to impart an air of ferocity to the countenance, and a heavy underlip with drooping corners; the shadows of this unpleasant type of divine solemnity are oppressively dark and sad. The Virgin, on the other hand, is full of soft and benign expression; a drapery of white surrounds her face, which is modelled with copious colour, nicely blended, of a pale-white tone. St. John the Evangelist contrasts with the Virgin by vigorous colour and transparence; the face is soft, and beams with a calm sentiment of resignation. St. John the Baptist is less ably depicted, austere, not noble; through the half-closed lips the teeth appear, and

this trivial detail helps to mar the face. The Magdalen in tears is the most graceful figure in the whole composition; the head is covered with a white turban, from which a delicate veil depends, passing under the chin and leaving the neck exposed; a low, grey dress, tightly laced in front, exhibits all the forms, and is scantily covered by a blue drapery. In the Magdalen's hand is the cup of ointment. Great harmony and modelling may be noticed in the flesh tints, which are delicately outlined; the hand holding the ointment is well proportioned, and contrasts favourably with those of all the other figures, which are thin, ill-jointed, and ill-designed. It is characteristic, indeed, that in parts, such as the extremities, a feeble knowledge of anatomy is shown; whilst in others, as in the neck and bosom of the Magdalen and the throat of the Evangelist, considerable attainment in the same study is remarkable. The general aspect of the draperies is broader and less angular than that of Van der Weyden generally; they are painted with a breadth and profusion of colour which mark them as a late production of the master's hand; nor can we fail to notice that, in the execution of a varied landscape background, Van der Weyden has been more than usually successful. Behind the Baptist, Jerusalem forms a landscape marked by some aërial perspective, enhanced and strengthened in effect by the lines of the meandering Jordan. The light upon these landscapes is that of early morning, the twilight casting its white colour on distant snow mountains, not unlike those in Van Eyck's picture at the Louvre.

This votive altar-piece is like that of Beaune in its style and mode of execution, the Saviour in both having much the same character. St. John the Baptist



also possesses similar features of resemblance. The figure of the Magdalen is the original of more than one of Memling's sentimental female saints, the feature of the altar-piece being particularly this, that the female figures surpass the male in a marked manner. Nothing, indeed, is more striking than the execution and preservation of the Magdalen; in some of the male faces and hands the shadows of the flesh tints have partially suffered from over-painting; but, with these exceptions, the panel is in excellent preservation. In the catalogue of the Grosvenor Gallery this altar-piece is attributed to Memling; but characteristic points show that it was painted by Van der Weyden, who had less feeling and grace, and less parsimony of colour than his pupil.<sup>1</sup>

One of Van der Weyden's lost pieces—a gift, in 1446, to the Carmelites of Brussels, represented the Donor and his family kneeling before the Virgin and the Infant Saviour, above whom two angels soared, supporting a crown of stars; on the wings at one side were monks; on the wings at the other side a knight of the order of the Golden Fleece with his family. This triptych was damaged by Calvinists in 1581, and restored in 1593; it has since perished.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grosvenor Collect. Wood, centre, 21 inches by 15, each wing 10½ inches by 15. On the sky above the Saviour these words: "Ego sum panis vivus qui de cœlo descendi. Joh. VI. 51. Above the Virgin, "Magnificat anima mea Dominum et exultavit sp̃s meus in Deo salv." Luc. I. 46. 47. Above the Evangelist, "Et verbũ caro factũ est et habitavit in nobis." Joh. I. 14. Above the Magdalen, "Maria ergo accepit libram unguẽti nardi pistici, pretiosi et ũxit pedes J̃su. Joh. XII. 3. Above the Baptist, "Ecce Agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi. Joh. I. 29. In the collection of the Brit. Mus. 7 by 5¼ inch. is the drawing for the Magdalen without the hand and cup. It is catalogued as by "John of Bruges". A photograph of it is in the Beffroi, u. s.

<sup>2</sup> *Sanderus. Chron. Sacræ Brabantiæ*, 1593. Vol. II. p. 293.

Another picture of Mary embracing the Saviour was probably painted at this time,<sup>1</sup> as well as the "Martyrdom of the Philosophers converted by St. Catherine," executed for the convent of Groenendael.<sup>2</sup>

Van der Weyden had long been married to Elizabeth Goffaerts, a lady of his own station. He was independent in means, having money at interest in the "domaine de Brabant" and in Tournai;<sup>3</sup> Cornelius, one of his sons, was studying at the College of Porc in Louvain; his daughter Margaret, born at Tournai in 1432, was marriageable; Peter, his second boy, born at Brussels in 1437, had elected to learn the paternal trade; Jean, the third, born at Brussels in 1438, was apprenticed to a goldsmith.<sup>4</sup> A dwelling in the Rue de l'Empereur, with part of a tenement at a corner of the Montagne de la Cour at Brussels, was the place of usual residence for the whole family.<sup>5</sup> Every re-

<sup>1</sup> A. Wauters. *Revue Universelle des Arts*, u. s. Vol. II. p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. II. p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> Michiels, *Gaz. des Beaux Arts*, u. s. XXI. 203.

<sup>4</sup> Wauters, *Revue Universelle*. II. p. 11. Michiels, *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, u. s. XXI. pp. 203. 225. Margaret died in 1450, Jean, in 1468.

<sup>5</sup> Twenty years previous to his death (according to Wauters, u. s., *Revue Universelle des Arts*), Roger Van der Weyden owned the house and the tenement at the corner of the Montagne de la Cour. The latter property was rated to the poor of the parish of Ste. Gudule for a sum of forty-eight livres, half of which was paid off between the years 1444 and 1465 in the name of Roger the painter (Meester Rogier, scildere). The account-books from which these details are drawn, sometimes contain the word *aldair* after the painter's name, which signifies that Roger lived in the house; at other times the painter's name as Meester Roger Van der Weyden without the "aldair". In the year 1443, the wife of William de Heersele paid this rate; after the death of Roger Van der Weyden, viz. from 1466 to 1491, and from 1494 to 1498, the payment was made by the sons of William de Heersele's wife, who are called Meesters Rogiers oor Van der Weyden; in 1492-93, however, it was made by Peter Van der Weyden, and from 1499 to 1539, by a person of the same name, qualified as

cord and every historical fact seems to point to a constant residence at Brussels; and yet there is ground for assuming that at some period between 1440 and 1450, Van der Weyden occasionally lived at Bruges. Cyriacus of Ancona calls him Roger of Bruges.<sup>1</sup> Van Mander and Værnewyk tell how Roger of Bruges painted cloths; they speak of numerous works in churches and houses.<sup>2</sup> Dürer alludes to "Rüdiger's painted Chapel" in the Kaisershaus, and his "costly" pictures in Sanct Jacob of Bruges,<sup>3</sup> and when the agents of the Duke of Ferrara pay Van der Weyden for work that he has done, he is called "M<sup>o</sup>. Ruziero depintore in Bruza."<sup>4</sup> It may be that the cloths of which these accounts are given, or a triptych which Dürer called "a chapel," were portable works taken from Brussels to Bruges, that Bruges being better known than Brussels, was the place upon which the Ferrarese agents were ordered to negotiate their payments; it may have been from Bruges that Van der Weyden started on the journey which he made, in 1449, to Ferrara and Rome.

The constant communications between Italy and Flanders by Lombard and Belgian traders had made the Italians well acquainted with the advance of art

"master." Peter Van der Weyden, who paid the rate of 1492-93, is no doubt the son of Roger Van der Weyden, as other documents are in existence to prove that he lived and was married, as far back as 1484. The second Peter Van der Weyden is supposed to be a grandson of Roger, and son of the first Peter. There is no doubt that he was a painter, because he is mentioned in the accounts of 1511, as proprietor of Roger's house and described as "portrateur," and remembered in the list of anniversaries of Ste. Gudule as "Magister Petrus Van der Weyden, pictor." No traces are left of productions from the hand of this Peter.

<sup>1</sup> Cyriacus in Colucci, u. s. XV. 143.

<sup>2</sup> Van Mander, u. s. 203. Værnewyk, Hist. v. Belg. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Reliquien, u. s. 121.

<sup>4</sup> See records postea.

in Belgium. Pictures by John Van Eyck had been sent to Sicily. An altar-piece by Van der Goes had been taken to Florence; and the names of Flemish painters were mentioned with respect at least by Neapolitans; but this acquaintance was not at first mutual; for few Italian paintings had found their way into Belgium. A few years, however, after the death of John Van Eyck a circumstance occurred which might well contribute to make the painters of the two countries curious of each other. Antonello da Messina came to Flanders, learned the uses of oil medium, and carried back to Italy the practical results of his experience. The new improvements were calculated to excite, they actually did, as we have seen, excite inquiry in Italy, and Van der Weyden very probably thought that there was at least experience to be gained by visiting the Peninsula.

Ferrara, to which we first trace him, was the seat of a court in which literature and art were cultivated with much assiduity;—a city of artificial growth favoured by a constant immigration of foreigners, Italian and Transalpine. From the earliest years of the century to a period subsequent to Van der Weyden's visit, it was the habit of the Marquises of Este to employ artists of distant schools. Side by side there might be seen in the same edifices, Henry of Brabant and Baroncelli of Florence, sculptors whose carved work was illuminated by Michael the Hungarian. The fashionable goldsmith was Simone de "la Magna;" and Zanin "de Franza" designed embroidery for ecclesiastical dresses.<sup>1</sup>—Vittor Pisano took to Ferrara the complex style of an Umbrian modified by contact

<sup>1</sup> Citadella (Luigi Napoleone) *Notizie relative a Ferrara*. 8°. Ferrara, 1864. pp. 62. 74. 79. 80—82. 419.

with the Veronese, and Piero della Francesca was preparing to introduce the choicer elements of Umbro-Tuscan art. Angelo di Pietro of Sienna, who, strangely enough, earned the name of "Parrasio," doubtless carried thither the antiquated manner of his countrymen;<sup>1</sup> and Bono Ferrarese imported that which he had learnt at Padua.<sup>2</sup> Conspicuous amongst local craftsmen, Galasso Galassi scarcely rose above the rugged and repulsive grimness of the 14th century; whilst Tura and Cossa were striving to perpetuate the stern but unpleasant realism of the Mantegnesques. It is easy to conceive that Van der Weyden, when transplanted to such a soil, would be received with favour. The tendency of Ferrarese artists such as Bono, Galasso, Tura and Cossa was to favour pictorial forms essentially related to those which were accepted as perfect beyond the Alps. The Squarcionesque type was more coarsely realistic, the Squarcionesque mask was plainer than that of the Flemish naturalists. As Van der Weyden, early in 1449, finished a triptych representing the Descent from the Cross, the Expulsion, and a portrait of Lionel d'Este, Bono and Angelo of

<sup>1</sup> We have no pictures to point to. Angelo di Pietro d'Angelo, or Angelo del Macagnino was a Siennese painter, whom we find charged with murder at Nocera in 1439. The governors of Sienna vainly asked for his enlargement, which was refused by the Cardinal of Florence, Giovanni Vitelleschi. His will in the archives of Sienna is dated from Ferrara on the 5th of August 1458. (See Milanesi [Gætano]. *Documenti per la storia dell'arte Senese*. Tom. II. 187—8 and 295). He was in the service of Lionel and Borso d'Este from 1444 to 1456, and painted several panels in the so-called Studio at Belfiore. (Private communication from Marchese Campori of Modena).

<sup>2</sup> See *History of painting in North Italy* by the authors of this work. I. 375, and *Citadella* (L. N.) *Documenti &c. risguardanti la storia artistica Ferrarese*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Ferrara 1868, pp. 112. and 364, from which it appears that Bono was employed at Sienna in 1441—2 and 1461 and at Ferrara in the ducal service in 1450.



Sienna were engaged in the country seats of Migliaro and Belfiore, Galasso was about to decorate the palace of Belriguardo, and Tura was on the eve of entering, if he had not actually entered, the service of the Marquis.<sup>1</sup> It is said by Cyriacus, that Angelo of Sienna became an imitator of Van der Weyden,<sup>2</sup> but we observe the same tendency in all the Ferrarese of the time, who might have done better than adopt the dryness of the chief of the Tournaisian school. That Van der Weyden, in the spring of 1449, made personal acquaintance with the Ferrarese artists whom we have mentioned, hardly admits of a doubt when we observe that the payments made to him in the name of Lionel at Ferrara, and later in that of Borso at Bruges, passed through the hands of Filippo "de li Ambruoxi," who was Tura's assistant.<sup>3</sup> What became of the triptych at Ferrara was never discovered; but we may perhaps consider as part of it the beautiful panel at the Uffizi

<sup>1</sup> Cyriacus in Colucci. *Antichità Picene*, u.s.XV. 143. Facius (B.). *De viris*, p. 45. *History of Italian Painting*, u. s. I. 414. 516 and the preceding note.

<sup>2</sup> Cyriacus, u. s.

<sup>3</sup> A dì XXXI de decembre duc<sup>i</sup> venti d'oro per lei a Filippo de li Ambruoxi et compagni per nome di Paolo de Porio de bruza per altri tanti che el deto paulo pagò a M<sup>o</sup> Ruziero depintore in bruza per parte de certe depinture de lo Illu<sup>mo</sup> olim nostro S<sup>r</sup> [Lionel] che lui faceva fare al deto M<sup>o</sup> Roziero come per Mandato de sua olim Signoria registrato al registro de la camera de l'anno presente." *Memoriale of 1450 in the archives of Ferrara favoured by Marquis Campori.*—The Marquis also found the following in a *Memoriale of 1451*: "Duc. 20 d'oro a Filippo delli Ambrosi per tanti che fece pagare ad un depintore in Abruza per le mane de paulo poro de laura per due figure chel deto paulo fece fare in Abruza per uxo et servizio predicto come per Mandato de lo illu. Nōs. S. che appose registrato nel registro della camera &c.—Cyriacus states that Lionel d'Este showed him the *Deposition and Expulsion at Ferrara* on the 8th of July 1449 (VII Iduum Quintilium die N. [Nicolai] V [quinti] P. [Papæ] A [anno] III [tertio]). For the fact that Filippi degli Ambrosi was Tura's assistant see Citadella, *Documenti*, u. s., p. 108.

which so completely answers to Cyriaco's description.<sup>1</sup> It is a small piece, in which we see the body of the Saviour supported by Joseph of Arimathea, the Virgin to the left holding his right, St. John to the right grasping his left arm; Mary Magdalen kneeling in front and grieving. The scene is laid in an open meadow, with Calvary in the distance, and a landscape full of figures. The composition is well ordered, and the Saviour is one of the most successful that the master ever painted; the colour of full body, clear, and well preserved, and some of the heads admirable in their realism.

Was it Van der Weyden's fortune to visit Milan before he came to Ferrara, or did his fame reach the Sforzas through the Estes? There is a picture in the Zambeccari collection at Bologna, which points to some connection between Van der Weyden and the Milanese court at a period subsequent to the painter's travels in Italy.

It represents the Saviour crucified and bewailed by the Virgin and St. John Evangelist. Two kneeling figures face each other in the foreground. The first, a man in armour, supposed, from the shield and helm near him, and from a certain likeness between this and other portraits, to be Francesco Maria Sforza Duke of Milan, the second a female believed to be Bianca Visconti. A page to the left of the latter, is taken to be the son of Francesco and Bianca Galeazzo Maria Sforza; the page seems 15, Francesco 58, years of age.<sup>2</sup> The style and execution of the panel

<sup>1</sup> Florence Uffizi. No. 795. Wood, small and admirably preserved.

<sup>2</sup> Francesco Maria Sforza was born in 1401, Galeazzo in 1444.

are those of Roger Van der Weyden; the head of Sforza has been rubbed down and retouched. The wings of the altar-piece represent landscapes (with, to the left), St. Francis and another saint, and above them the adoration of the Saviour;—(to the right), St. Catherine and St. Barbara, and above them St. John the Baptist; the upper scenes of the wings are in the manner of Memling. On the outer side of the wings, in dead colour, is St. Michael on horseback, to the right, killing the dragon; St. Jerom to the left extracting the thorn from the lion's paw; in the distance an altar with the Saviour on the Cross. These two panels are very fine, well relieved, and in the style of Memling.<sup>1</sup>

Of what effect was Van der Weyden's visit on the technical treatment of panel pictures in this part of Italy? The existence of a new medium in Flanders must have been made known to an increasing number of craftsmen; and it is not beyond the range of probability that Van der Weyden's receipts may subsequently have become familiar to Piero della Francesca as they must have become familiar to Galasso, Tura, and Cossa; but the Flemish style, as displayed in the masterpieces of the Netherlands, was certainly treated by Italians with general coldness, and this for reasons stated at a later period by Michael Angelo, who thought too much attention was expended on tints, green fields, trees, rivers, bridges, and landscapes filled with many scattered figures, and who considered that Flemish painting had no art, no symmetry, no proportions, no selection, and no grandeur.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wood, oil, 1 f. 9½ by 1 f. 11 Eng. measure.

<sup>2</sup> *Raczynski. Les Arts en Portugal.* 8°. Paris, 1846. Michael Angelo gave this opinion of Flemish art, in conversation with the Marchioness of Pescara, Vittoria Colonna.

From Ferrara Van der Weyden proceeded to Rome, hardly, we should think, avoiding Florence which lay temptingly in his way. There we may conceive the staid and puritanical Fleming gravely admiring the masterpieces of Florentine art, from the time of Giotto to that of Beato Angelico, wandering into the Chapel of the Brancacci, scanning with eagerness the classic figures of Masaccio, and unconsciously following the footsteps which Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Leonardo were afterwards known so frequently to tread.

The Garden of the Medici was not then in its splendour, but Cosmo had long been known for his magnificence and generosity, chiefly to the Dominicans and their favoured painter Beato Angelico. The same feeling which induced him to build a room in the convent of San Marco, for the purpose of enjoying the works of the best artist of the religious and mystic school, might lead him to appreciate and to welcome a stranger imbued like Van der Weyden, with an unusual share of religious zeal. Roger was commissioned to paint a Madonna; and under the attributes of St. Cosmo and St. Damian he is said to have transferred to the picture the features of Cosmo's dearest children, Piero and Giovanni. After some vicissitudes the panel was carried away from Italy, and finally came to rest in the Staedel collection at Frankfort, but the arms of Florence in a scutcheon beneath the foreground, and the presence of Cosmo's patron saints Cosmo and Damian, conclusively prove for whom it was ordered.<sup>1</sup> The Virgin stands under a dais with the Saviour affectionately clasped to her bosom, between St. Peter and St. John and St. Cosmo and St. Damian. There is no religious piece in the complex of the master's

<sup>1</sup> Frankfort, Stædel. No. 66. Wood, 1 f. 8 h. by 1 f. 2.

works which displays more tender feeling. The heads are natural and expressive without loss of austerity or dignity; the colours are laid on with stiff impast and pleasant clearness; and the draperies are cast with unusual simplicity and breadth.

Amongst the great men in art at Florence in the middle of the century were Lippi and Ghiberti. Whether these representatives of the highest Italian genius met or associated with Van der Weyden is unknown. Angelico, to whom some sympathies seemed likely to bind him, had left Tuscany some years before for Rome; but even there it would appear the two masters did not meet, and Van der Weyden was inclined to neglect rather than praise the compositions of the inspired Dominican.

Taking advantage, no doubt, of the pilgrim caravans which from all parts of Italy made their way to the Jubilee, Van der Weyden reached Rome in 1450, with the purpose of visiting and admiring the treasures of art already numerous there. He found the city restored to some sort of splendour by the efforts of Martin the Vth, Eugenius the IVth and Nicholas the Vth. He visited amongst other churches, San Giovanni Laterano, and seeing there the wall distempers of Gentile da Fabriano declared that they were the work of the best painter in Italy. It was the softness and blending of a manner akin to his own in its serenity that, we should think, attracted and pleased him.<sup>1</sup> We know not how, or at what time exactly, Van der Weyden went back to the Netherlands. His pictures found their way to the furthest ends of the Peninsula;—to Naples, where Alphonzo of Arragon owned a Madonna meeting Christ on the road to Golgotha, to Genoa, where Facio saw

<sup>1</sup> Facius. De viris, u. s., pp. 48-9.



the only *genre* composition of the Brussels painter,—“women in a bath.”<sup>1</sup> It is characteristic that Van der Weyden came home to his native place unchanged and immoveable in the peculiar practice which makes his productions so easy of recognition.

Foremost amongst the influential men from whom Van der Weyden had commissions on his return from Italy we should notice Pierre Bladelin, treasurer of the Golden Fleece, and Jean Robert, abbot of St. Aubert of Cambrai, both of whom were connected in different ways with the court of the Dukes of Burgundy. Of the first it is related that he rose by perseverance and honesty from the position of a simple citizen at Furnes to that of an officer of the ducal household. His marriage with Margaret van de Vageviere, a rich heiress of Bruges, gave him an introduction to Court; and he soon passed through subordinate offices to that of director of finance and keeper of the privy purse.<sup>2</sup> Disliked by the courtiers because he was economical, he preserved a stainless reputation for integrity; and so, won the favour of Philip the Good and his son Charles the Rash. With an annual income of six thousand gold pieces, which Philip doubled yearly as a reward for his services, Bladelin founded the little town of Middelburg in Flanders, where he subsequently contrived to settle the burnt-out coppersmiths of Dinant.<sup>3</sup> The castellated mansion and the church, which were the most pro-

<sup>1</sup> Facius. De viris, u. s., pp. 48-9.

<sup>2</sup> “Sub eo (Lodovicus Malanus) commemoratur virum nobilem, Nicolaum Bladelinum, ob Gravelingam contra Anglos fortiter sed infauste defensam.”—*Marchantius*, u. s., p. 290. See also Comp. Chron. Episc. Brug. p. 170-183. *Messenger des Sciences et des Arts de Belgique*, 1835. pp. 333-348.

<sup>3</sup> *Chronique de Chastelain* in Buchon, Coll. de Doc., u. s., Vol. XLVII, Chapt. 164, p. 47.

minent buildings of the place, were finished as early as 1450,<sup>1</sup> and the high altar of the latter was decorated with an altar-piece by Van der Weyden.

Jean Robert was both an abbot and a man of the world. He was on terms of intimate friendship with his bishop Jean de Bourgogne, who sometimes paid him a visit accompanied by Philip the Good. On these occasions the convent walls reechoed sounds which were not those of penitent prayer. The bishop and the Duke dined luxuriously at the abbot's board, and Philip boasted that he drank the abbot under the table.<sup>2</sup> For the high altar of St. Aubert of Cambrai, and at the special request of Jean Robert, Van der Weyden painted an altar-piece which, it is very probably conjectured, now lies in the Museum of Madrid.

The Middelburg altar-piece was removed in comparatively recent times from its original resting place, and came at last into the Berlin Museum; a brighter or more attractive one it had not been the painter's fortune to complete. The patron of the altar, the treasurer Bladelin, is conspicuous in the foreground of the central panel, praying with great devotion before the Infant Christ. The subject is the Adoration of the new born Saviour, a subject conceived in the feeling of the Nativity by Van der Goes at Santa Maria Nuova of Florence. The light which radiates from the Infant illumines the figures of Mary and Joseph, who kneel about the litter; whilst in the gloom of the distance the shepherds adore the Presence. Subordinate

<sup>1</sup> They were only commenced, according to Guicciardini (*u. s.*, p. 472) in 1446.

<sup>2</sup> De Laborde (*Les Ducs de Bourgogne. Vol. I. Introduction* p. 58) cites the records of Cambrai for these facts.

to this incident the kings of the East prostrate before a vision of the Infant in heaven, and Mary with the Child appearing to Augustus, are painted on the side panels. It would be difficult to name a picture of the time in which portrait character is more cleverly marked. We see the living form of Bladelin in the dress of his time; nothing more quaint than his black fur pelisse, black tights and pattens, except perhaps the quaint apparition of Augustus in the garb and semblance of Philip the Good. There is a wondrous disregard of proportion in the several parts of the composition; the heads are prominent and overweighted when contrasted with frame and limb. The three angels which adore the Majesty of the Babe at the Virgin's knees are diminutive as those of Nelli at Gubbio, they are mere children by the side of Bladelin; but the finish of the parts, the delicacy of the touch, and the gloss of the colours are very attractive, and a melancholy serenity dwells in the features of all the dramatis personæ.<sup>1</sup>

The altar-piece of Cambrai was ordered at Brussels by Jean Robert in person, who entered the date and conditions of his contract in a journal kept by himself:

"On the 16th of June of the year -55, he says, I, John, abbot, bargained with Master Roger de la Pasture, the master-workman in painting at Brussels, to make a picture, five feet square, having eleven stories of such device as the work will show. These were made at various dates; and the said picture was six and a

<sup>1</sup> Berlin Museum. No. 535. Centre panel 2 f. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  h. by 2 f. 11. Wings 2 f. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  h. by 1 f. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ . We still read the false signature: "JOH. MEMLYNCK fec." The triptych was bought of Mr. Nieuwenhuijs.—A copy of it still exists in the church of Middelburg. Canvas m. 1.02 h. by 1.85.

half feet high and five feet broad; which picture was finished on the day of Trinity, in the year -59, and cost in principal 80 golden pieces, of 43 sols 4 den. each, money of Cambrai, all of which was paid at divers times. And was likewise paid to his wife and workmen, when the picture was brought, two pieces of gold of 4 livres 20 den.; and it was taken by the carman, Gillot de Gonguelieu du Roquier, in the first week of June, in the year -59, on a cart with three horses."<sup>1</sup>

Amongst the pictures transferred within the last few years from the interior of Spanish monasteries to the Museum of Madrid one was observed by the late Dr. Waagen to answer the description given by the abbot of St. Aubert. In this triptych, which measures about the same size as that entered in the journal at Cambrai, we find the three great episodes of gospel history embodied: in the centre, the crucifixion with the seven sacraments in the background of a Gothic church;—to the right, Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise; to the left, the Last Judgment; and in the carving of the pointed arches in which these subjects are set, six scenes from the Passion, seven days of the Creation, and seven works of charity. Dr. Waagen, who describes this altar-piece minutely, seems to have been of opinion that Van der Weyden never produced an example more remarkable than this for fitness of distribution, liveliness of incident, or truthful expression in heads.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Archives de Cambrai in De Laborde, u. s., *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*. Vol. I. Introduction, p. LIX.

<sup>2</sup> Madrid Museum. Wood (not seen). On the outer side of the triptych there are large figures of Christ giving the tribute money, and Christ with one of the apostles. The three panels together measure M. 1.96 h. by 2.43. The triptych came directly into the Museum from the Monastery de los Angeles at Madrid. See G. F. Waagen's "Ueber in Spanien vorhandene Bilder" in

Van der Weyden never signed nor dated any of his pictures; and it is only by their style that we distinguish his works. We are thus in doubt as to the time when the Epiphany and the Virgin sitting to St. Luke—two fine compositions in the Gallery of Munich—were executed; but these altar-pieces display much the same treatment as the Nativity of Middelburg, which is the finest production of the master, and we may assign them to the same period.

The picture of St. Luke was bought by the brothers Boisserée at Brussels, and was described as having belonged to a chapel in which the mass of the painter's guild was annually read.<sup>1</sup> It was held in great veneration and frequently copied, and is probably that referred to in the following passage of Dürer's diary:

"Mehr 2 Stüber geben vor Sanct Lucas Tafel aufzusperren."<sup>2</sup>

In course of years the name of the artist who painted it was forgotten, and the catalogue of the Munich Pinakothek registered it till quite recently as by John Van Eyck. St. Luke, attended by the ox, kneels on the right with a drawing board and style in his hand, and looks musingly at the Virgin, who sits enthroned under a rich dais, giving the breast to the Infant Christ. The scene is laid in an open hall through the pillars of which we see a terrace and battlements, down which a man and woman look at a garden, a city

Heft 1. p. 40 of A. von Zahn's *Jahrbücher für Kunstwissenschaft* for the year 1868. Compare also Kinkel's "*Brüsseler Rathhausbilder und deren Kopien.*" 8°. Zürich, 1867.

<sup>1</sup> There is no certainty as to the name of the church in which the painter's guild at Brussels originally had its chapel. We only know that it had a chapel in the 17th century in Notre Dame de Bon Secours. Consult Pinchart, *Annotations*, u. s., CCLXIX.

<sup>2</sup> *Reliquien*, u. s., p. 90.



wall, a river lined on both sides with houses and turrets, and a landscape of blue hills. The wonderful minuteness of this distance, and its close resemblance to that in John Van Eyck's votive panel at the Louvre, (Rollin) are an excuse for the nomenclature so long retained by the brothers Boissérée. It is only when we turn to the study of form and treatment that we perceive the hand of Van der Weyden. We note the stiffness and strain which peculiarly distinguish the Brussels master, his oblong shape of heads, his lean and lanky frame of infants, his habitual surcharge of small and broken folds in superabundant drapery, and his hard and inflexible contour; and yet with all these faults, and injured though it be by rubbing, repainting, and modern coloured glazings—the picture is a fine one and well worthy of Van der Weyden.<sup>1</sup>

The triptych of which the Epiphany forms the centre, was bought from the Church of St. Columba at Cologne, for which it is said to have been painted; yet in the figures of the kings who adore Christ, that which kneels and kisses the Infant's hand is a likeness of Philip of Burgundy, and that which stands to the right is Charles the Bold, whilst a patron behind St. Joseph remains unknown. On the right wing of the altarpiece, the Annunciation; on the left, the Presentation to Simeon are depicted. No picture of the master

<sup>1</sup> Munich Pinakothek. Cabinets. No. 42. Wood, 4 f. 4 h. by 3 f. 5½. An old copy of this piece, formerly belonging to the Infante Sebastian, is in the Santa Trinità Mus. at Madrid. Another copy, belonging (1860) to the sculptor Hans Gasser at Vienna (Waagen *Ermitage*, p. 117), is perhaps the same described by Passavant (*Kunstblatt* 1841. No. 5) as in possession of Professor Hauber of Munich. A copy of the St. Luke alone is No. 445 in the Hermitage of St. Petersburg; it was bought at the sale of the collection of King William I. at the Hague, and came originally from Spain. Wood, 2 f. 11¾ h. by 1 f. 7.

is more imbued with religious feeling; none is more happily arranged and carried out. The Epiphany became a model composition in the Flemish schools; it was copied by numerous followers of Van der Weyden; conspicuous amongst whom we should cite Hans Memling.<sup>1</sup>

Van der Weyden was not celebrated for artistic skill only. He was of good repute as a citizen, and known for his benevolence, so that Lampsonius could write of him:

Non tibi sit laudi, quod multa, et pulchra, Rogere,  
 Pinxisti ut poterant tempora ferre tua.  
 Digna tamen, nostro quicunque est tempore Pictor  
 Ad quæ, si sapiat, respicere usque valit:  
 Testes picturæ, quæ Bruxellense tribunal  
 De recto Themidis cedere calle vetant:  
 Quam, tua de partis pingendo extrema voluntas  
 Perpetua est inopum quod medicina fami,  
 Illa reliquisti terris jam proxima morti.  
 Hæc monumenta polo non moritura micant.

His portrait, which has been preserved, represents him as a beardless man of 50 with short shock hair, and a look of serious melancholy. In the background hangs a bit of his favorite composition, the "Dieu de Pitié."<sup>2</sup> When he sent his son Cornelius to take the cowl at Hérinnes he endowed the monastery with a sum of 400 crowns; he was equally liberal to the Carthusians of Scheut;<sup>3</sup> his affiliation to the religious brotherhood of the Holy Cross in the Church of

<sup>1</sup> Munich Pinakothek. Cabinets. No. 35, the Annunciation; No. 36, the Epiphany; No. 37, the Presentation. Wood, the centre piece 4 f. 4 h. by 4 f. 10; the sides 4 f. 4 h. by 2 f. 3. The surfaces are injured by abrasion and altered by coloured glazes. A replica or copy of the Presentation is in the private collection of the Emperor of Germany, another in the Czernin collection at Vienna. See also *postea* in Memling.

<sup>2</sup> See Lampsonius. *Pictorum aliquot celeb.*, u. s.

<sup>3</sup> *De Vaddere. Historia monast. n. d. de G. ord. Carthus. (Scheut), ap. Wauters Revue Univ. des Arts, u. s., II. Oct. 1855, p. 35.*

Caudenberg by Brussels is noted in a record of 1462.<sup>1</sup> In 1461 we find him valuing as referee some stone tinting, executed by Pierre Coustain for Philip the Good in the palace of Brussels.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the pictures of his later time we may notice the Crucifixion, a triptych in the Belvedere at Vienna, where the Virgin is represented fainting at the foot of the cross and supported by St. John; two donors, a male and a female, kneel in the foreground; and St. Veronica and the Magdalen are introduced into the side wings. Though assigned to Martin Schongauer, it is a good school piece from Van der Weyden's workshop, and exhibits the practised hand of an artist familiar with anatomical design. It is marked by an affected air in the heads, wan forms, large eyes with their eyelids thinly coloured, and pallid landscapes with foregrounds intersected by crevices and covered with spare vegetation.<sup>3</sup> We are less sure of Van der Weyden's authorship in the large panel of the Seven Sacraments, which hangs in the Antwerp Museum, though the scutcheons on it prove that it was painted for Jean Chevrot, bishop of Tournai.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ruelens, Notes et Additions, u. s., CXXXIII.

<sup>2</sup> "A Pierre Coustain, peintre et varlet de chambre de MdS. la somme de VIII<sup>xx</sup> livres de XL gros, monnoie de Flandres, la livre, qui deue lui estoit: assavoir, qui lui a été taxé et ordonné par maistre Rogier, aussi peintre, es présence de Messire Michault de Chargy, chevalier, maistre d'hostle de MdS. et de feu MS. Le Gruyer de Brabant, pour auoir paint et ouvré deux ymaiges de pierre, l'un de la représentation de Saint Philippe, et l'autre de Saincte Elizabeth, lesquels MdS. a faict mettre et asseoir en son hostel au dit lieu de Bruxelles auprès de la chambre devant la porte par où l'on va au parc . . . De Laborde. Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s., I. p. 479.

<sup>3</sup> Vienna, Belvedere. Second floor, room I. Wood, centre 3 f. 2 h. by 2 f. 2, wings 3 f. 2 h. by 1 f. 1. In the sky there are four grieving angels.

<sup>4</sup> Antwerp, Mus. Nos. 393, 394 and 395. Wood, m. 2.0 h. by 0.97. A Magdalen at the foot of the cross is the figure most in the spirit of Van der Weyden's art.

Van der Weyden died at Brussels on the 16th of June, 1464, and was buried under "a blue stone" in the nave of the church of Sainte Gudule,<sup>1</sup> where the body of his wife, who survived him many years, was also placed; on this blue stone were the lines:

"Exanimis saxo recubas, ROGERE, sub isto,  
Qui rerum formas pingere doctus eras;  
Morte tua Bruxella dolet, quod in arte peritum,  
Artificem similem non reperire timet.  
Ars etiam mœret tanto viduata magistro  
Cui par pingendi, nullus in arte fuit."<sup>2</sup>

In quaint Latin and Flemish the joint resting-place of Roger and his wife is registered in the book of burials at Sainte Gudule:

"Magister Rogerus Van der Weyden, excellens pictor, cum uxore,  
liggen voor Ste. Câtelynne autae onder eenen blauwen steen"<sup>3</sup>

Yearly masses for the soul of Van der Weyden were founded by his wife. Part of a pension paid to her by the corporation of Brussels, as the widow of their "portraiteur" (20 gold peeters), she gave in 1477 to her relative Henrich Goffaert, Canon of Caudenberg, to spend in masses for the repose of her self and her husband.<sup>4</sup>

There is reason for not accepting as genuine two panels which bear Van der Weyden's name, in the Belvedere at Vienna. Of these the first represents the Eternal in heaven, the Virgin and Child, and St. Anne

<sup>1</sup> Sweertius, u. s., p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> A. Wauters, *Registre des sépultures*. *Messag. des Sc. hist.*, 1845, p. 145.

<sup>4</sup> A. Wauters, *Cartulaire des Archives de l'abbaye de Caudenberg*. *Messag. des Sc. hist.*, 1845, p. 144. Elizabeth Goffaert's family owned a house near that of Roger and opposite the palace of Nassau at Brussels (now the Museum). Wauters, *Revue Universelle des Arts*, u. s., II. p. 11.

kneeling, two little dogs in the foreground, and a hedge of roses, behind which is a landscape and a city.<sup>1</sup> The second is an Adoration of the Magi; both are poor productions of a later date.<sup>2</sup>

Of another picture at Berlin, ascribed to Van der Weyden and signed "Sumus Rugerii manus," it is well to note the following:<sup>3</sup>

Zanetti, in his "Pittura Veneziana,"<sup>4</sup> mentions a panel suspended, at the time he wrote, in a passage leading from San Gregorio, at Venice, to a neighbouring convent. He thought, at first, that it must be by Roger, yet doubted when he found that the panel was of Venetian fir, and not of the oak in use amongst the Flemings. At a later period Lanzi saw this piece in the Nani Palace at Venice, and repeated Zanetti's statement.<sup>5</sup> Some persons who think that Van der Weyden visited Venice when he came to Italy, might suggest that he would then paint with the materials of the country; and they might think this the more natural as the Anonimo (ed. Morelli) describes a portrait of Van der Weyden in the house of Marco Zuanne Ram at Venice, in 1531, finished in oils by Roger himself, and dated 1462. This, however, would not prove that Roger was in Venice.<sup>6</sup> The Anonimo

<sup>1</sup> Vienna, Belvedere. Second floor, Room II, No. 7. Wood, 1 f. h. by 0.8 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

<sup>2</sup> Belvedere. Second floor, Room 1, No. 105. kneepiece. Wood, 2 f. 2 h. by 1 f. 8.

<sup>3</sup> No. 1163, Berlin Cat. Centre, 4 f. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  z. high by 1 f. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$  z. broad, wood; wings, each 4 f. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  z. high by 1 f. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  z. broad. From the Solly collection.

<sup>4</sup> Zanetti, *Pittura Veneziana*, 1771, lib. I. p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Lanzi, Vol. III. *Scuola Venez.*, Epoca prima, p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> There is a curious coincidence of date between the portrait mentioned by the Anonimo and that of the late Mr. Rogers' Collection, said to be a portrait of Memling. This portrait was in the Aders Collection. "In casa de M. Zuanne Ram a. S. Stefano



merely says that the portrait was "from the hand of Rugerio da Burselles;"<sup>1</sup> and it is certain that the family of Ram was one of wealthy merchants established at Venice for purposes of trade,<sup>2</sup> and likely to have had this portrait from Flanders. But all such speculations fall to the ground as we look at the picture. The subject is Saint Jerom on a throne, to the right, Mary Magdalen, and to the left, St. Catherine; the style, Italian of the sixteenth century, and the wood on which it is executed peculiar to the Venetians. From the attitude and motion of the saints, and the character of the heads, which not only differ from those of Van der Weyden, but of the Flemish schools in general, it is certain that the picture was done by a painter of the school of Padua. The figures have the slenderness, the features the aquiline contour uncommon in Flemish productions; the outlines and drapery, are hard; the colour has the thinness which marked the school of Mantegna.

Supposing, therefore, even that Van der Weyden came to Venice, and that he, and not Antonello, carried thither the secret of oil-painting, it still remains a certainty that this is not a picture produced by him, but the work of some unknown artist of the Italian school.

The Gallery of Munich contains but one picture to which the name of Van der Weyden is attached:<sup>3</sup>

(in Venice) 1531. *El ritratto de Rugerio da Burselles, pittor antico celebre in un quadretto de tavola a oglio, fin al petto, fù de mano del' istesso Rugerio, fatto al specchio nel 1462, u. s., p. 78.*

<sup>1</sup> Anonimo, ed. Morelli, u. s., p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 140.

<sup>3</sup> No. 65, Pinak. Cat. Cab. IV. Wood, 1 f. 9 high by 1 f. 2½ broad; from Ambras Castle in Tyrol.

"Christ crowned with thorns;" it is not unlike the weak production of a pupil of Quintin Massys.

The type of the school is more visible in the "Annunciation" of the Antwerp Gallery,<sup>1</sup>—a diminutive panel, painted with great care and finish, and not dissimilar in execution from one in the Louvre, attributed to Lucas Van Leyden, and of old supposed to be the work of Memling.<sup>2</sup>

It is not quite certain that the portrait said to be that of Philip the Good, in the same collection,<sup>3</sup> is a likeness of that prince, though Louys engraved it for the Collection of the Dukes and Princes of the House of Burgundy, by Jonas Suyderhof. It was purchased at Besançon, in 1827, and once belonged to the minister Colbert. In style it is hard and dry, like a neighbouring bust of a monk, attributed to Memling. In the Academy of Bruges there are also two pieces falsely assigned to Van der Weyden. The first is the Adoration of the Magi, the second the Adoration of the Shepherds, a night scene; both executed half a century after Van der Weyden's death.<sup>4</sup>

Three panels from the abbey of Flemalle are catalogued as by Roger in the Stædel collection at Frankfort. They represent the Trinity, St. Veronica, and the Virgin and child, and are painted in the style of Van der Weyden's school.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No. 396, Antw. Gal. Cat. Wood, 0.20 m. high by 0.12 m. broad.

<sup>2</sup> No. 595, Louvre Cat. Now classed in the school of Memling.

<sup>3</sup> No. 397, Antw. Cat. 0.38 m. high, 0.22 m. broad. Wood.

<sup>4</sup> Bruges Acad. Nos. 35, 36, forming part of one altar-piece and now classed "unknown." On the outer side of those panels (37 and 38) are scenes from some obscure legend.

<sup>5</sup> Frankfort, Stædel. Nos. 72, 73, 74. Wood, arched, each panel 4 f. 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> h. by 1 f. 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. See *Messenger des Sciences hist.* 1846. p. 149.

A panel in the late Wallerstein collection (Kensington Palace) represents Joseph of Arimathea supporting the body of Christ, which is embraced by the Virgin with deep affliction. This is the work of an imitator of Van der Weyden's compositions.<sup>1</sup>

A Descent from the Cross in the gallery of the Hague assigned by Waagen to Van der Weyden, but catalogued as Memling, has much of the master's character but less finish, and a darker flush of tone than is usual when he works in person. It may be a school piece.<sup>2</sup>

The Deposition in the Tomb ascribed to Van der Weyden, at the National Gallery, is a dry grey tempera which betrays the hand of a German imitator.<sup>3</sup>

Unsatisfactory in other ways, and surely but a school piece, is the small crucified Saviour between the Virgin and Evangelist with the Magdalen at the foot of the Cross in the Gallery of Dresden.<sup>4</sup>

School pictures likewise, and of a very inferior class, are the eleven panels under Van der Weyden's name in the Museum of Brussels.<sup>5</sup>

The Virgin and Child in half length with a damask hanging for a background, and the same subject full

<sup>1</sup> Wallerstein Collection. Wood, 2 f. 6½ h. by 1 f. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Hague Museum. No. 55. Wood. See Waagen's Handbook. 1860. p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> London National Gallery, No. 664, tempera on linen. 2 f. 10 h. by 2 f. 4, bought in Milan.

<sup>4</sup> Dresden Mus. No. 1718. Wood, 1 f. h. by 6 inches.

<sup>5</sup> Brussels Museum, No. 33, head of a woman in tears, Wood, m. 0.48 h. by 0.32. No. 38. Wood, m. 1.44 h. by 0.57. Christ carrying his cross; No. 39. Christ crucified, both parts of one altarpiece. No. 34. The Annunciation and the Infant Virgin received by an Angel; 37, Christ and the Doctors; 35, Nativity and Epiphany; 36, Circumcision; 40, Christ at the Tomb; 41, the Disciples and Maries at the Sepulchre. Two panels of this series, the Adoration of the Shepherds and the Presentation in the Temple are missing. All the panels are of the size of No. 38.

length in a landscape, are ascribed to Van der Weyden in the collection of Prince von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, without having any claim to be accepted as genuine.<sup>1</sup>

A head of Christ seen to the shoulders, bought by Mr. J. M. Parsons from the Abel Collection at Stuttgart, is amongst the works assigned to Roger Van der Weyden.<sup>2</sup>

The Brussels Royal Library contains a manuscript of the Chronicles of Hainaut in which there is a miniature falsely assigned to Roger Van der Weyden. Mr. Wauters ascribes to Roger Van der Weyden a series of tapestries called the "Seven Sins," of which many are in Spain.

He also speaks of a newly discovered picture in two compartments, one of which represents the Marriage of the Virgin, the other an unknown subject in which an old man is led before a bishop, whilst in the foreground two figures lie in prostrate supplication. The costumes are of the 15th century, and the style of the pictures similar to that of the "Seven Sacraments" at Antwerp.

In 1613, after the death of the Duke of Aerschot, an inventory was made of his property amongst which was the following: "Six paintings, of a round form on wood, with painted mouldings, and having in golden letters a history of the life of Joseph;—the whole painted in oil properly and artificially, and as was judged

<sup>1</sup> Prince von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. No. 50 in the Munich Exhibition of 1869. Wood, m. 0.29 h. by 0.21. No. 54. Wood, m. 0.28 h. by 0.20.

<sup>2</sup> London, Mr. Parsons. Wood, 0.39 h. by 0.28. Not seen by the authors.

by the painter Novilliers, by the hand of Master Roger.”<sup>1</sup>

The catalogue which has now been given of the works, real or fictitious, by Van der Weyden, shows that many of his celebrated pictures are no longer extant. The canvasses of the town-hall at Brussels perished in the bombardment of 1695. Almost all the pictures in Italy are missing:—the Women Bathing, at Genoa; the Adam and Eve and donor, at Ferrara; and the pictures of Alphonzo of Naples. The portrait in the Gallery of Zuanne Ram, at Venice, may, as has been remarked, be that which goes under the name of Memling in the late Mr. Rogers’s Gallery; if it be so, it is not a genuine Van der Weyden. A Virgin and Child, full length, in a temple, the property of Gabriel Vendramin, at Venice,<sup>2</sup> has also perished. The pictures of the Gallery of Margaret of Austria—the Trinity, a small piece; the portrait of Charles the Rash; and a diptych of the Crucifixion and the mass of St. Gregory—are no longer to be found.<sup>3</sup> The altar-piece of the Carmelites of Brussels has disappeared, together with numerous canvasses which adorned the convent of Groenendael in the forest of Soigne,<sup>4</sup> and the picture in the collection of Archduke Ernest, in 1593.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pinchart, note to Wauters’ *Revue Univ. des Arts*. No. 8. Nov. 1855. p. 89, extracted from the *Archives judiciaires de Mons*.

<sup>2</sup> Anonimo ed. Morelli, *u. s.*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> “Ung autre double tableau. En l’ung est Nostre Seigneur pendant en croix et Nostre Dame embrassant le pied de la croix, et en l’autre l’histoire de la Messe M. S. Saint Grégoire.” The inventory of 1516 adds, “fait de la main de Rogier.”—*Inventaire de Marg. d’Autriche, De Laborde, u. s.*, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Sanderus, *Flandria Illust.* Vol. II. p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> “Marie embrassant son fils de Rogier de Bruxelles.”—*Inventaire; ap. De Lab., Les Ducs de Bourg. u. s.*, Vol. I. *Introd.* p. 113.



The name of "Roger Van der Weyden the younger" has been freely given in our time to pictures in which we trace little more than the style of Van der Weyden's school as handed down by pupils and assistants in his workshop. It would be tedious to notice the numerous works which fall into this class; but it may be said of the majority of them that they are unworthy of any serious attention. There is some trace of a painter called Roger Van der Weyden in the register of the Antwerp guild for 1528,<sup>1</sup> but we know nothing of pictures that he may have executed; and it is on mere presumption that school pieces are assigned to him because they are reminiscent of the shop of old Roger Van der Weyden.

Goswyn Van der Weyden, born at Brussels in 1465, and free of the guild of St. Luke at Antwerp in 1503, is described as the master of numerous apprentices between 1504 and 1513. In 1504 and 1530, he was "elder" of the corporation. This painter is known to have composed a triptych, historically traced to an altar in the Church of Tongerlo, representing the Death, Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin. Goswyn represented himself on the wings with his grandfather; and above these two figures was a tablet with the following inscription:—

"Opera R. P. D.

"Arnoldi Streysterii hujus ecclesiæ abbatis hanc depinxit posteritatis monumentum tabulam Goswinus Van der Weyden, septuagenarius suâ canitie, quam infra ad vivum exprimit imaginem, artem sui avi Rogerii, nomen Apellis suo ævo sortiti, imitatus redempti orbis, anno 1535."

Or, in English:—

<sup>1</sup> Antwerp Catalogue, u. s. p. 38.

“For Arnold Streyter, abbot of this church, Goswyn Van der Weyden, a septuagenarian, painted this picture—a monument for posterity, in his old age, which expresses within it, to the life, his image, imitating the art of his grandfather, Roger, called the Apelles of his age, in the year of the Redemption of the World, 1535.”<sup>1</sup>

It has been usual to accept a diptych of the Assumption, in the Brussels Museum, as a part of the altar-piece of Tongerlo, but the error upon which this assumption was founded has been completely exposed of late years, and we have no records to prove that Roger Van der Weyden had a grandson of the name of Goswyn.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See A. Heylen in Wauters, *Revue Universelle des Arts*. II. 330.

<sup>2</sup> See Ruelens in *Notes et additions*, u.s., CXXXVI. The picture is No. 631 in the Brussels Mus. catalogue.

## CHAPTER IX.

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### ANTONELLO DA MESSINA.

TRADITIONS current in Vasari's time attributed to Antonello da Messina, a Sicilian painter of the 15th century, an important if not an absolutely decisive part in transmitting the secrets of oil medium from the Netherlands to Italy. It is the duty of a historian of Flemish art to inquire whether these traditions are true, and then to determine to what portion of Italy they apply. It is obvious that Vasari on the whole inclined to believe that the technical treatment of the Van Eycks was first taken to Venice, and thence to central Italy; his statement being positive to this effect that the art of "colouring in oil" was invented by the Van Eycks, communicated by John Van Eyck to Antonello da Messina, taken by Antonello to Venice, imparted by him to Domenico Veneziano, and through Domenico to all the painters of Tuscany. We shall find it expedient to modify this statement in many important particulars, firstly because oil painting was practised in Tuscany sooner than at Venice, secondly because serious doubts may be entertained as to whether John Van Eyck ever lived to see the countenance of Antonello, and thirdly because the systems of painting in oil practised in Venice and Florence differed as much technically as they did in respect of the time in which they were introduced.

There seems to be little doubt that the first serious attempts made in Tuscany to substitute a new process

for that of tempera dates from a period more than thirty years later than that alleged for Van Eyck's discoveries; but it is peculiarly characteristic of Tuscan efforts that they were not confined to effecting changes in panel painting alone; they also embodied modifications in vehicles adapted to wall painting; and it is not unlikely that the antipathy of the Florentines for oil medium on its first introduction was due to the conspicuous failure of those who tried it on mural surfaces.

About the time usually assigned to the finding of oil medium in the Netherlands Cennino Cennini, at Padua, wrote a celebrated treatise in which the receipts for mixing boiled linseed oil with pigments were transcribed from those familiar to painters of the time of Giotto. Fifty years later (1460—64), Filarete still spoke of oil painting as a "pretty method when you know it," affirming that it was practised by Van Eyck and Van der Weyden, but not by himself, and as far as one can judge from the tone of his remarks, repulsive to many Italians. Yet if we believe Vasari most of the decisive steps which led to the introduction of the new method into Italy had already been taken, and Antonello had visited Venice on his return from the Netherlands and communicated to Domenico Veneziano the secret which he imparted to the Florentines. The truth is that about the first half of the 15th century the Italians were cognizant by report of the improvements of the Van Eycks, and made experiments of their own to discover what those improvements were. Francesco Peselli, Baldovinetti, and the Pollaiuoli made the first trials at Florence, and they were followed in Umbria by Domenico's pupil Piero della Francesca. Historical records have disposed of the legend in which Andrea del Castagno is described as

having murdered Domenico Veneziano in order to monopolize the secrets wormed out of Antonello. Accurate research has proved that if Domenico or Castagno painted in oil, they did so without possessing the technical methods of the Van Eycks or Antonello. Francesco Peselli, who died young in 1457, is one of the few Florentine craftsmen in whom we trace the striving to substitute a new medium for that of tempera. He was a realist partial to the reproduction of natural minutiae, who felt that his object would better be compassed with slow dryers than with the quick siccatives of tempera. There is evidence in the pictures which he left to us, that his oil and varnish mediums were of that glossy transparence and yielding toughness which preclude accuracy and crispness of touch; and there is proof that they were neither easy to work nor easy to blend. Baldovinetti, who was born in 1427, and who lived till 1499, was also a realist whose habits as a panel painter were those of Francesco Peselli, whilst as a designer of wall pictures he made innovations by moistening pigments with the pernicious mixture of liquid varnish and yolk of egg. Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo, whose birthdays are registered in 1429 and 1441, also used oils and improved upon their predecessors by introducing the practice of coloured glazing; but at the outset of their career they also had to suffer from the viscous nature of the vehicles in use. Piero della Francesca—a more successful practitioner amongst the moderns—exhibited skill as an oil painter and came nearer to the clearness and purity of the Flemings than any of his predecessors or contemporaries in Central Italy, but we cannot trace his use of oils further back than 1460—66, and it must remain a moot question, as we have seen,



whether he did not learn some of the Flemish technica from those who frequented Roger Van der Weyden's company in Ferrara.

Antonello da Messinas' career has been recently shown to possess more importance in connection with the history of Venetian art than in connection with Flemish painting; but a sketch of his life will be required here, in order to show how deeply Venice was indebted to him, and through him to the Netherlands, for the creation of its school of colourists.

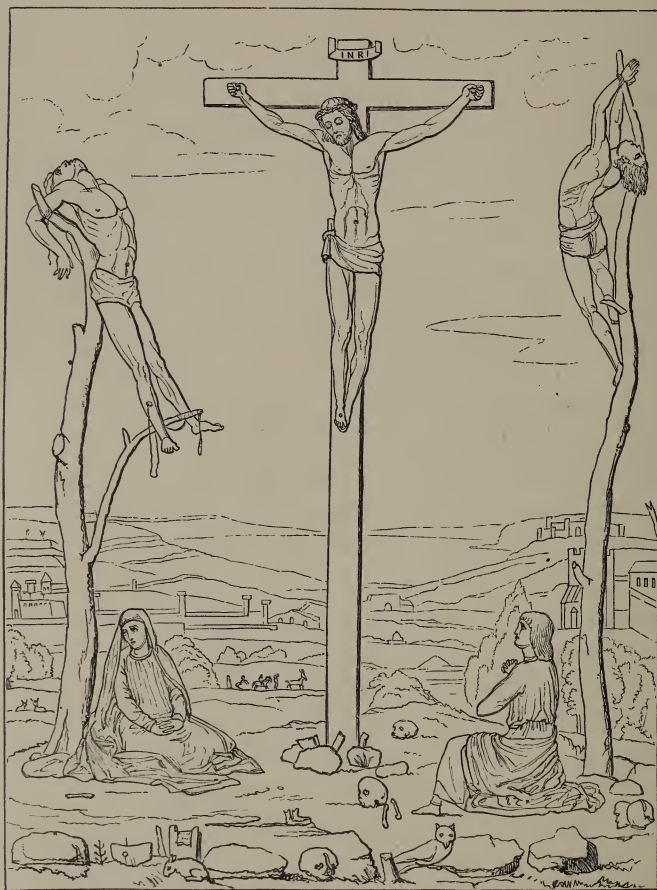
We saw that Flemish pictures had become an important article of commerce at Naples in the first half of the 15th century. As the panels of Van Eyck and his followers found their way out of the hands of dealers into the palaces of princes, the curiosity of artists was aroused, and Antonello da Messina was induced to wander to the Netherlands to study at the fountain head. Whether Antonello visited Bruges or Ghent or Brussels, whether he personally knew John Van Eyck, improbable as that circumstance appears to be, or whether he only made acquaintance with disciples of Van Eyck, is immaterial, if we accept as a fact, which there is no doubt we may, that the visit took place. In favour of his journey to the Netherlands we have not only the authority of Vasari and Van Mander but the evidence of pictures which prove a close acquaintance with the technical processes of the older Flemings, and it is not without interest to students of art in England to know that the earliest production of Antonello, after his return to Naples, is the bust of Christ in benediction at the National Gallery, a panel executed in 1465, with all the care of a man working in a new method, but without the mastery of one who has acquired all its subtleties. Antonello, it

is clear, preserved the character of an Italian craftsman unimpaired, whilst he took home the technical system of the Belgians; yet his Christ of 1465, though original in mask and contour, is not without solemn gravity and stillness, and so not unmarked by characteristics common to Flemish creations. In later productions such as an *Ecce Homo* in the Zir collection at Naples, (1470) or the *Annunciation* and *Madonna between St. Benedict and St. Gregory* (1473), at San Gregorio of Messina, we see the influence of Flemish example in distortion and mouthing, in certain casts of face, and in the angular character of brocades and drapery; whilst technically the system of execution is that of the school of Bruges.

At this period of his artistic development Antonello wandered to Venice, where he entered into active competition with men who had never heard any thing of oil painting except the name, and produced with his works such a sensation that the course of Venetian art was changed, the Vivarini and Bellini giving up not merely the habits of tempera painters but the spirit of classic design inherited from the Florentines and Paduans. Up to 1473, all the works of Bartolommeo and Luigi Vivarini, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, and their numerous disciples had been executed in tempera; within less than ten years it was impossible to find a single Venetian willing to paint otherwise than in oil. Time necessarily elapsed before the change was thoroughly worked out. Antonello himself in numerous portraits and solitary figures, progressed to mediums pellucid in clearness, and to a technical treatment perfect in its blending and finish.

The Venetians, Giovanni Bellini in particular, made untiring efforts to acquire subtleties which Antonello





THE CRUCIFIXION.

By Antonella da Messina, in the Antwerp Museum.

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was not willing to teach, and went through all the phases which are distinguishable on pictures of the time between viscous and highly coloured mediums, and the clear free-running ones of the moderns. Then occurred that memorable and curious change of parts which has been noticed in the lives of these painters, when the genius of Bellini carried him beyond the rival whom at one time he might have despaired of reaching, and then imposed on him his own more genial and coloured manner.

Amongst the works which gave Antonello fame on his arrival in the North, the most important was that which attracted the attention of several generations at San Cassiano of Venice and subsequently disappeared. We possess perfect specimens of portrait in his best manner, a bust of a youth (1474), in the collection of the Duke of Hamilton, a portrait of a man with a scarred upper lip called in recent times "the condottiere" (1475), at the Louvre; a male in a black cap and red dress, under Bellini's name, in the Borghese palace at Rome, a bust said to represent Antonello himself in possession of Signor Molfino at Genoa; a man of 60 in the Trivulzi Palace at Milan (1476), and a Venetian patrician in the house of the Giovanelli at Venice. We may take as the pearl of creations of this class the clear and beautifully modelled likeness of a young man. (1478) at Berlin. Of pictures with sacred subjects those chiefly to be noticed are the crucified Saviour between the crucified thieves, a small panel executed in 1475,<sup>1</sup> not without reminiscences of the Flemings, Christ at the pillar in the Venice Academy, where pain and suffering are expressed after the fashion of the Belgians and Paduans; the same sub-

<sup>1</sup> Antwerp Mus. No. 4. Wood, m. 0.58 h. by 0.42.



ject, once in possession of Mr. Robinson in London, and Christ in his tomb with three angels in the Belvedere of Vienna. Illustrative of the change which occurred when Antonello found it expedient to follow the more genial manner of Bellini the most noticeable works are the Virgin and Child in half length in the Museum of Berlin, and a series of busts and half lengths of St. Sebastian, which may have been executed during the painter's stay at Milan, of which the chroniclers have left us a vague and unsatisfactory tradition.

When Antonello died about 1493, the grateful public of his time honoured his memory with the following epitaph, in which the fulsome flattery of the age described him as a benefactor to art, not only at Venice but throughout Italy:

"D. O. M.

"Antonius pictor, præcipuum Messanæ suæ et Siciliae totius ornamentum, hac humo contegitur. Non solum suis picturis, in quibus singulare artificium et venustas fuit, sed et quod coloribus oleo miscendis splendorem et perpetuitatem primus Italicae picturae contulit, summo semper artificum studio celebratus."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vas. IV. 81. For a full catalogue of Antonello's works this is no longer the place, and the reader must be referred to histories of Italian painting.

## CHAPTER X.

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### CONTEMPORARIES OF THE VAN EYCKS.

WHEN John Van Eyck was appointed "varlet de chambre" to Philip of Burgundy, a change was made in the functions of the ducal painters; the arts were honoured in his person by increased respect and pay, and the common labour of the ducal court,—such as painting standards, pennons, and banners,—was entrusted to a lower class of men. When Jehan Malouel died, in 1415, his place was filled, as we have seen, by Bellechose of Brabant.

In Flanders, Jehan le Voleur, the colleague of Jehan Malouel was "paintre" and "varlet de chambre," and filled a post of honour in the castle of Hesdin. Jehan le Voleur's skill consisted only in manufacturing standards, banners, and pennons. At his death, in 1417, he was succeeded as governor of Hesdin by Hue de Boulogne.

The castle, or chastel d'Hesdin, was a favourite resort of Philip of Burgundy, and a place of rest to which he retired for amusement. It contrasted strangely with the pleasure palace of Louis the Eleventh near Tours, where the grounds were known to bristle with deadly instruments intended to maim trespassers. Hesdin was as full of pitfalls and trap-doors as a modern theatre; but they only served to perpetrate the coarse though harmless jokes in which the fun of the

Middle Ages consisted, and seem to have suited the robust and healthy constitutions of the people of those days. A stranger issuing, for instance, from a gallery into a neighbouring passage, was liable to be startled by the sudden apparition of a wooden figure spouting water. A wetting and a fright were the necessary consequences; but when the joke was carried furthest, a set of brushes was put in motion, and the patient emerged with a white or a black face, as the case might be. Another still more powerful engine was one which seized a man and thrashed him soundly.

In the centre of the great gallery there was a trap, and near it the figure of a fortune-teller; ladies were his most frequent victims. They no sooner felt an interest in the telling of their fortune than the ceiling opened and poured forth rain; thunder-claps followed in quick succession, preceded by appropriate lightning; and, as the air grew colder, snow fell; taking refuge from the storm, the patient entered a dangerous shelter above a pitfall leading into a sack of feathers, from which a ludicrous escape was at last permitted.

The castle of Hesdin was full of tricks of this description. Besides the pitfalls just described, there was a bridge in the great gallery which dropped saunterers into the water. In various places there were engines which spouted water when they were touched; six figures stood in the hall spouting water, and wetting people in various ways; at the entrance of a gallery there were eight water-jets to drench people as they passed, and three small pipes were so fixed close by as to cover them with flour. If the panic-stricken victims rushed to a window and opened it, up came a figure wetting them, and closing the frame; a splendid missal on a desk caught a curious eye, but

the person who went up to it was either covered with soot or dirt. A mirror close at hand betrayed the trick; but whilst the victim wondered at the blackness of his face, a flour-dredger made him white.

The most elaborate of all these tricks was ne combining almost every species of deception. A figure of a man was made to start in the great gallery, frightening people by talking or crying; at the noise, the loungers in other rooms rushed in, upon which a number of figures, armed with sticks, came forth, driving every one pellmell to a bridge, where they fell, of course, into the water.

Colart le Voleur was the author of all these mechanical tricks, for which the Duke requited him with a sum of a thousand livres. Colart and Hue de Boulogne, however, were generally employed in painting banners and pennons. The name of the former disappears from the ducal records in 1443. Hue died in 1449; when his son, Jehan de Boulogne, succeeded him as "peintre" and "varlet de chambre." But the post of governor of Hesdin was given to Pierre Coustain, who took the title of "peintre des princes," and is known to have lived till 1471.<sup>1</sup>

Pierre Coustain and Jacques Hennecart were "peintres de M. D. S.," and managers of the "entremetz" at Bruges, when Charles the Rash was married, in 1468.<sup>2</sup> Olivier de la Marche has given a glowing account of these "entremetz." His enthusiastic pen describes the famous lions which roared so well and harmlessly at the company, and the beauteous shepherdess who

<sup>1</sup> See antea in *Cristus*, and see also *le Beffroi*, u. s., I. 205, and *Journal des Beaux Arts* 1860, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> See, for all these court painters, *De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, u. s., Vols. I. and II.

turned her compliment so elegantly to the new princess; but he forgets the arts. He recollected upwards of ten "histories" in the streets that led to Charles's palace; but only described two of them representing Eve and Adam in Paradise, and the Marriage of (!) Alexander and Cleopatra. He tells of St. Andrew and St. George painted as supporters to the arms of Burgundy, but mentions no pictorial work produced by any of the painters present at that time as being worthy of record or admiration.<sup>1</sup> Van der Goes, whose well-known talents might have elicited praise or blame is not known to de la Marche. It seems that Tournai, Gand, Ypres, Cambrai, Arras, Douai, Valenciennes, Louvain, Antwerp, Brussels, Bois le Duc, Dordrecht, Gorcum, each furnished painters, sculptors, or workmen for the occasion. Amand Regnault was paid 10 sols per diem for running to Ghent, to Audenarde, and other "good towns," in search of the best workmen in the country—"painters as well as others." Jâcques Daret master-painter of Tournai, was engaged with others for sixteen days, at 27 sols per diem. The pay of others varied from 6 to 24 sols, and more; the wages being paid according to a tariff made out for the occasion by the elders of the corporation of painters in Bruges.<sup>2</sup> Out of a list of upwards of three hundred thus employed and paid, but a few are remembered at this day except Van der Goes.

What contemporary writers forgot has fortunately not escaped modern research. The painters of the *entremetz* are men who remained in comparative obscurity, but whose existence is still worthy of attention

<sup>1</sup> Olivier de la Marche, Mémoires, 8<sup>o</sup>, Gand. 1566, p. 524.

<sup>2</sup> Reiffenberg, u. s., Appendix. De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s.



men who were ready at any moment to do an odd piece of work in the way of their trade, who would contract "to paint and varnish a culverin," emblazon a coat of arms, colour a dogvane, or compose a last judgment, men who entered into time bargains, who were bound by rigid stipulations, and who, not being known for extraordinary genius, were made to promise that their work should be no better and no worse than that in any church or town hall known to both the contracting parties. It would be uninteresting to register the names of many of these second rates whose memory has been preserved in the records of the municipalities, and whose pictures have either perished or become confounded in the mass of productions catalogued in galleries as "unknown," but a few sentences devoted to Jan and Nabor Martin, may be sufficient to illustrate the class. Ghent never employed an artist *ex officio*, like Van der Weyden at Brussels or Dierick Bouts at Louvain. It had a town architect (*stede mets*), a town smith (*stede smet*), but no town painter (*stede scildere*). The guild of St. Luke was about the smallest of the 59 corporations of the city. To this guild belonged, early in the 15th century, Willem Axpoele, John Martin and Nabor (Nabuchodonosor) Martin. Willem Axpoele was the son of Daniel Axpoele, who, as early as 1379, matriculated in the guild of St. Luke. Willem took the freedom in 1387, and became dean or elder in 1399. Jan Martin and Willem Axpoele painted in partnership for several years of the 15th century. Martin took the freedom of the guild in 1420, was appointed sworn arbitrator (*geswoorne*) in 1430, and dean or elder in 1448—9. In 1419—20 Martin and Axpoele entered into a contract to repaint the entrance hall of the *Scepenhuus* at Ghent, then disfigured

by faded temperas representing the Counts of Flanders from Baldwin of the Iron arm to Jean Sans Peur. It was stipulated in this document that the portraits (full length, size of nature, and about 30 in number) should be repainted in oil; each of the counts being distinguished by a coat of arms, the date of his birth, and the number of years he had reigned "exactly as had been done for the portraits of the same Counts at Courtrai." The whole of the work was to be completed in four months for the sum of six livres and six sols de gros (about 72 livres parisis).

It is only from the tenor of this contract that we know of the existence of these paintings. They have long since disappeared, but the coarse nature of the work may be inferred from the shortness of the time allowed for its completion and the smallness of the remuneration. Willem Axpoele now ceased to be Martin's coadjutor, and the latter followed his vocation alone or in partnership with one Willem de Ritsere. In 1422 Martin cleaned and varnished, for 20 escalins (12½ livres parisis), 16 iron culverins delivered to the city of Ghent by Colard Guyse of Maubeuge. In 1431—2 he was again employed in the entrance hall of the *Scepenhuus* at Ghent, later still as a painter of standards, pennons, and escutcheons. He seems after this to have assigned commissions to his son Nabor Martin (b. 1404), who became free of the guild of St. Luke in 1437. Nabor's name is registered in the communal accounts of Ghent for 1440—43, 45, 46, 48 and 49, in connection with payments for decorative wall painting, and an altar-piece in the chapel of the *Scepenhuus*. He received 15 liv. 3 escal. and 4 den. de gros (183 liv. par.) for decorative work in the chapel of the Parchons, 21 livr. de gros (252 liv. parisis) for a cruci-

fixion and other artistic labour in the chapel of the Keure (1433—39). In 1448 he furnished designs for the carved work and balustrades of the Ghent *beffroi*. He also painted on various occasions banners and shields, and amongst others 12 escutcheons furnished to Ghent envoys sent to Paris on a mission—"the said escutcheons to hang before the doors and mark the rank of the envoys." Nabor did not disdain even to charge for painting the dogvane on the top of the gate leading into the Hospital of St. Bavon, and for colouring the trelliswork enclosure of the *Scepenhuus*; he was in fact for years the painter in office of the communal authorities without the title of *stede scildere*. As he advanced in years he undertook more important works. In January 1442(—43) he contracted to paint for the Church of St. Walburge at Audenarde a folding altar-piece to be delivered on the 24th of June, and failing in the performance of this part of his agreement he was summoned before the sheriff of Ghent, who ordered him to proceed to Audenarde and finish the picture on the spot, under a penalty of 1 l. de gr. (12 l. par.), for every absence he might make. In 1443(—44) he again contracted for an altar-piece for the church of Lede, a village between Ghent and Alost the subject being the Assumption of the Virgin, the price 20 livr. de gros, and a penalty for non-completion of the contract of six l. de gr., and the suspension of the freedom of his guild. It was further stipulated that the work, when finished, should be submitted to the sworn arbitrators (*geswoorne werclieden*) of the guild, who were to decide whether the picture was equal to the sum named in the contract, or worth more or less; in the one case, the authorities of the church of Lede to pay the surplus, in the other, Nabor

to be content with a less sum. In 1443 Martin made a third contract with Lievin Sneevout a master baker at Ghent, for a picture of the Last Judgment at the price of 24 esc. de gr., to be completed within a given time under penalty of a fine not exceeding four fifths of the sum named in the contract. The most curious feature in these contracts is the stipulation in the case of the picture of the Assumption at Lede, "that the altar-piece shall be equal to that which stands in the Church of our Lady of St. Pierre," and in the case of the picture of the Last Judgment that it "shall be as well executed, and of as many and as good figures as the picture of the Last Judgment which hangs in the meeting hall of the Bakers' House."

It is supposed, and not without reason, that Nabor Martin is likewise the painter of a Nativity discovered in 1855, in the Butchery (*vleeschhuus*) at Ghent, and inscribed, . . . "heeft doen maken Jacob de Ketelbo . . . en schreef MCCCC ende XLVIII," or as restored by Mr. de Busscher: "Dit heeft doen maken Jacob de Ketelboetere int yaer ons Heeren als men schreef MCCCC ende XLVIII," which being literally translated means, "This (picture) has been ordered by (has caused to be done) Jacob de Ketelboetere in the year of our Lord when mankind counted 1448." Of the painter not a word is mentioned in the inscription. In 1843 Mr. Theodore Schellynk, employed to classify the records of St. Martin d'Eckerghem near Ghent, found a document dated 1445, containing accounts of the church expenses for that year. Most of these accounts were illegible, and the record was accordingly destroyed. Mr. Schellynk, however, had been able to decipher a few of the notes of payments made, one of which he has since transcribed from memory. It runs as follows:



"To the painter Nabor Martin for a painting which he executed in the Chapel of our Lady, after the fashion of the work which he made in the Chapel of the great Vleeschhuus." It is particularly unfortunate that this quotation should only be made from memory; as it stands it bears a close resemblance to the tenor of the contracts into which Nabor Martin is known to have entered. There is corroborative evidence as to Nabor's authorship in this, that Jacob de Ketelbo is identical with Jacob de Ketelboetere, a butcher, who, in 1443, was elected honorary member of the guild of St. Luke, at the prayer of Nabor Martins to whom he had been surety in a matter of debt some years before.

It would be more important to have clear proof of Nabor's authorship as regards the frescos of the Grande Boucherie at Ghent, if these were preserved, than it is now that they have lost their original character under the hands of restorers.—The subject represented is the Adoration of the Infant Christ; the babe lying on a bed of rays in the midst of a circle of figures, including the Virgin, Jacob de Ketelboetere, two angels, and, as the story goes, the patron's father and mother;—God the Father looking down from heaven, the Dove sending its light to the Saviour, and a shepherd tending his flock in a landscape. In gala dress on the foreground are portraits of Philip of Burgundy and his son, and the Duchess of Burgundy with Adolf de Ravenstein her page;—all of them distinguished by their coats of arms. The individuality and style of the artist is lost under the skilful retouches of a modern.

If from Ghent we turn to other cities for reminiscences of old artists, we shall find it hard to do more than repeat what we find in the pages of the annalists.



Franz Mostaert, who lived in Haarlem in 1550, was ignorant of the names of any painters who had practised there in early times,<sup>1</sup> and the search made by Mr. Van der Willigen with such success as regards the 16th and 17th centuries was fruitless as regards the 15th.<sup>2</sup>

We are indebted to Van Mander alone for notices of Albert van Ouwater and Geertgen van St. Jans. He ascribes to the former an altar-piece in the Cathedral of Haarlem representing St. Peter and St. Paul of life size, and (on a predella) pilgrims on the way to Rome, pilgrims going, resting, eating, and drinking—in a landscape of the admirable kind distinguishing all the pictures of the older craftsmen of the city. He tells us that one of Ouwater's greatest admirers was Heemskerck, and adds that he himself had been struck with the cleverness of certain nudes, and the skilful rendering of extremities and drapery in Ouwater's "Raising of Lazarus."<sup>3</sup> In confirmation of Ouwater's existence we might quote the Anonimo, edited by Morelli, who speaks of landscapes executed by "Alberto d'Olanda" in the collection of Cardinal Grimani at Venice.<sup>4</sup> The pictures of Van Ouwater have disappeared, and Van Mander neglects or is unable to give the dates of his birth or death; on this account it is impossible to speak of any of his productions. Attempts have been made to attribute

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s., 206.

<sup>2</sup> A. Van der Willigen. *Les artistes de Haarlem*. 8°. Haarlem and La Haye, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> Van Mander, u. s., 206. "Lazarus, in the picture described, is near a temple with colonnades; the Jews and the people on one side, and the apostles on the other. Van Mander had seen but a copy; Heemskerck saw the original.

<sup>4</sup> Anon. ed Morelli, pp. 75. 220-1. The only record in which the name of Ouwater occurs at Haarlem is given as follows by Van der Willigen from the registers of Saint Bavon of Haarlem. (p. 49). "1467. Item, ouvert un tombeau pour la fille d'Ouwater. Sonné la cloche Salvator."

panels to him; but, in most instances, without sufficient grounds. The "Descent from the Cross" of the Cologne Museum, bearing a mutilated inscription, is assigned to him, and has some faint analogy of style with the works of the mixed schools of Brussels, Cologne, and Nuremberg. The "Dead Christ," by its meagre forms, and long attenuated frame, painfully exhibits in a magnified form the more disagreeable peculiarities of Van der Weyden, whilst the figure of the man who holds the Saviour's shoulders is remarkable for the ill-shapen leg and foot of the followers of Stephen of Cologne; other parts of the picture remind us of Wohlgemuth. This panel bears the date of 1480;<sup>1</sup> and if it were by Van Ouwater, would stamp that painter as one of the numerous imitators who thronged the Netherlands and the Rhine country at the beginning of the sixteenth century. But it is hard to conceive how Van Mander could call such a man clever in landscape and anatomy. Another point to be noticed is, that had Van Ouwater lived as late as the year 1480, he could scarcely have been forgotten so soon as he was at Haarlem. Van Ouwater must have been an earlier painter than the author of the "Descent from the Cross" of Cologne; and, assuming this, he can no longer be admitted as the author of other pictures which various writers have assigned to him. It is remarkable, indeed, that none of the compositions ascribed to Van Ouwater are like each other in style and manner. The "Crucifixion" of Berlin, once given to him by Hotho, is unlike the "Christ" of Cologne, and superior to it, and may be classed amongst the creations

<sup>1</sup> Cologne. Wallraff-Richartz Museum, Nos. 127—31. The wings of this picture bear the dates 1499. 1508. See postea, "Influence of Flemish Art abroad."

of an artist who imitated Memling,<sup>1</sup> whilst the Descent from the Cross of the Belvedere Gallery, at Vienna, is of the school founded by Lucas of Leyden.<sup>2</sup>

"Geerrit Van Haarlem or of St. Jans" is stated by Van Mander to have been placed as a youth under the tuition of Ouwater, and to have died at the age of 28; he lived according to the same authority with the knights of St. John at Haarlem, and was known by their name, though he was not of their order. For the high altar of the knights' church he executed a large piece representing the "crucifix," with wings of a similar size painted on both sides, two thirds of which perished during the storming of Haarlem. A wing that was saved remained in possession of the commander of the knights in two handsome pieces, got by sawing the panel into two parts. One of the sides represented a miracle, the other a Descent from the Cross, in which Christ was represented outstretched in a very natural attitude, mourned by the Marys and apostles. There were likewise once in the "Regulars" of Haarlem some works which perished in the siege, and there still existed (in Van Mander's time), in the Cathedral of Haarlem, a view of the church itself which was very cleverly handled. That Albert Dürer, on visiting Haarlem, should have declared, as Van Mander says he did, that Geerrit must have been a painter in his mother's womb, is in so far a fable as Dürer never was at Haarlem.<sup>3</sup>

In the Gallery of the Belvedere we shall observe two pictures, described in Christian von Mechel's cata-

<sup>1</sup> No. 573, Berlin Cat. See infra, "Imitators of Memling and Van Eyck."

<sup>2</sup> No. 12. Second floor, room second, Belvedere Gal. See *antea* in Van Eyck.

<sup>3</sup> Van Mander, u. s., p. 206, but compare Dürer in Campe's Rel.

logue of 1781, as works of "Geertge or Gerhard van Haarlem."<sup>1</sup> They are of one size, as if they were parts of a panel sawn in half. One of them represents Christ lying in the lap of the Virgin, and mourned by seven saints, the other, three scenes from the legend of John the Baptist;—his burial in the presence of Christ, the burning of his remains by order of Julian the Apostate, and the transfer of his ashes to St. John d'Acre.

The mere description of these pieces reminds us of the story told by Van Mander; and the subjects from the legend of St. John are such as would suit the Templars, whose convent Geerit is said to have inhabited, but the small size of the panels is in contradiction to the account of Van Mander, and the burial of St. John can scarcely be described as "a miracle." If these pieces were really assignable to the painter under whose name they are catalogued, we should take them to be by an artist of the 16th century under the influence of Quintin Massys; whose dusky tones, vulgar masks, and prominent noses are distinctly imitated. An inscription on the back of the "burial" proves that it once belonged to Charles the Ist, and was returned to Charles the II<sup>d</sup> by the States of Holland at the Restoration:

"This is the second piece, being one of the five pictures which were presented to the king at St. James's by the State their ambassadors."<sup>2</sup>

Three pictures, forming one triptych, are exhibited in the Munich Pinakothek under Gerard's name. They

<sup>1</sup> See Verzeichniss der Gemälde der Bilder-gallerie in Wien von Christian von Mechel. 8<sup>o</sup>. Wien 1781. p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Vienna Belvedere. Second floor, room second. Nos. 58 and 60. Wood, 5 f. 6 h. by 4 f. 5.

are of the same late date as the foregoing, but feeble in execution.<sup>1</sup>

A Crucifixion of the Saviour between the two thieves, with the usual numerous episodes that accompany that episode, may be seen in the Gallery of Modena under the name of Gerard of Haarlem. The figure of the Saviour is common enough, but better than the long wooden and stiff ones of the thieves; the composition is ill distributed and confused; atmosphere is totally absent, the figures are generally lean and thin, the draperies straight, angular, and broken;—the whole executed in a hard, mechanical, yet highly careful, manner. The draperies are touched up with gold and profusely ornamented with embroidery; the flesh tints are remarkable for a sad yellowish general tone.<sup>2</sup>

There are no references to paintings by any of the Gerards except in the *Anonimo*, edited by Morelli, where “works of Gerardo de Olanda” are described as forming part of the collection of Cardinal Grimani at Venice in 1521.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 84, 85, 86, Munich Pin. Saal. Wood.—“Christ leaving his Mother,” the “Descent from the Cross,” and “The Resurrection.” In this collection too we find under the name of Gerard, Nos. 87 and 90. Saal. Christ on the Mount and Mary with the dead body of Christ on her knees.

<sup>2</sup> Modena gall. No. 33. Wood, 8 f. 9½ h. by 5 f. 4½, purchased at the Mirandola.

<sup>3</sup> *Anonimo*, u. s., p. 77.



## CHAPTER XI.

HANS MEMMLING.

CLOSE by Notre Dame of Bruges is a lane paved with pebbles. Along this lane the wandering stranger strolls without hearing any footsteps but his own; he treads on moss and sickly grasses growing round the smooth worn stones; he stops at a wide arched door, raises the latch of a wicket and enters a court yard. Opening on this yard is a small enclosure planted with linden trees, under whose shade a feeble invalid is lounging; his grey jacket enwraps a form wasted by sickness; and a cotton nightcap all but covers his sunken eyes. Turning out of the yard into a doorway the stranger enters a wide stone edifice—a church it might be called—with nave and aisles, and quaint old pillars supporting arches; under these arches—on the floors of nave and aisle—are rows of beds, most of them occupied; between the rows, with noiseless step, glide the nuns who nurse the sick; a grate of mediæval size at either end glows with a genial fire. This is the Hospital of St. John, for centuries a refuge for the sick.

In one of the rooms attached to this charitable asylum, there hangs, amongst a host of valuable pictures, one which from time immemorial exercised an extraordinary power of attraction; it displays with serene but melancholy grace the mystic marriage of St. Catherine. The Virgin sits on a throne in a rich

church-porch; angels hold a crown above her; the infant on her lap bends to give a ring to the bride kneeling in regal raiment at his feet; to the right and left, the Baptist, Evangelist, and St. Barbara stand gravely in attendance; an angel plays on an organ; another holds a missal. Close behind St. Catherine, a monk of the order of St. Augustin contemplates the scene; further back, outside the pillars of the porch, another monk handles a gauge for wine and spirits; and in a landscape watered by a river, the Baptist prays to God, preaches to a crowd, wends his way to the place of execution, and burns—a headless trunk—at the stake; elsewhere, St. John Evangelist seethes in boiling oil, and rows in a boat to Patmos. On the right wing of the triptych the daughter of Herodias receives the Baptist's head, and dances before Herod. On the left wing St. John Evangelist is seated and looks towards heaven, preparing to note the vision before him. He sees the king of kings, the elders, the lamps of the Apocalypse, the lamb, the symbols of the Evangelist, and Death on the pale horse, bursting with his three companions on the men who flee; on the placid surface of the sea, the vision is reflected and forms a grand and imposing picture. On the outer face of the wings, Jacques de Keuninck, treasurer, Antoine Seghers, director, Agnes Cazembrood, superior, and Claire van Hultem, a nun of the hospital, are depicted under the protection of their patron saints. On the capitals of the pillars of the central porch are episodes of charity; a senseless man lies prostrate in a street attended by busy people; his body is carried on a stretcher to the hospital.

The painter of this surprising picture is Hans Memling, whose life, in course of years, became ex-

clusively identified with the monastery of St. John.<sup>1</sup> It was related that he had led a wandering life, that he had followed Charles the Rash, and received a wound in 1477 at Nancy; that he spent a weary time in returning to his native city, and finally fell senseless near the hospital gate. To repay the kindness of the nuns and hospitallers who received him, Memling spent some days of convalescence, and more of recovered health, to paint the Marriage of St. Catherine; he completed a shrine celebrated as containing the relics of St. Ursula, and he finished many a picture besides for which he took no pay.<sup>2</sup>

Years may pass before this legend ceases to find believers. The statements upon which it is based are fictions; yet there is something so dramatic and touching in the tale that most persons are willing to believe it; and no one likes to hear that it is apocryphal.

There are reasons why Memling's sudden appearance at Bruges, and the story of his sickness and recovery should have been thought credible by a certain class of enquirers. He was, we should think, the pupil of Roger Van der Weyden, whose habitual place of residence was Brussels; he came late in the century to Bruges, where he settled and painted the most beautiful of his works; his name had been probably overshadowed by that of his master; it came into startling light in a new place, where it dazzled the public

<sup>1</sup> The controversy as to the true name of Memling is set at rest by original records to which we shall refer. The name is spelled variously, "Memelyncx, Memelinc, Memlinc, Memmelinc, Memlijnc and Menelinc." See postea.

<sup>2</sup> See the story in Descamps' "Voyage pittoresque." 8°. Paris 1753, and an amplification of it in the "Notice des tableaux qui composent le Musée de l'Hôpital S. Jean à Bruges." 3d ed. Bruges, 1850, pp. 1—12.

of the time; it was forgotten for centuries like that of Hubert and John Van Eyck, and revived in legend at last, at the suggestion perhaps of persons who thought that the sick man depicted in the carved capitals of the Marriage of St. Catherine must necessarily be the painter himself. There was the more reason for giving currency to legends in respect of Memling's career, because historians had almost entirely forgotten to record his existence. Though second only to the Van Eycks, he was almost unknown to Van Mander,<sup>1</sup> and a stranger to Lampsonius, who praised all other artists of the Netherlands in Latin rhymes. Vasari turned his Christian name of Hans into Hausse, and Descamps that of Memling into Hemling.<sup>2</sup> No one knows even now when or where he was born; and it is only presumed that he was of Bruges because Van Mander says so.<sup>3</sup> German historians are inclined to think that he was one of their countrymen,<sup>4</sup> a theory in which they are supported by some Belgian writers;<sup>5</sup> whilst one Frenchman at least conceives that he was the son of an architect of Liège, who wandered early in the 15th century to the court of the Dukes of Savoy.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Concerning some of our Netherlanders whose works and lives are better known to me through their pictures than by reason of my acquaintance with their lives, I should say that there was first of Bruges a celebrated master in early times named Hans Memmelinck."—Van Mander, u. s., p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> Descamps, *Voyage*, u. s. Vasari, I. 163. IV. 76. XIII. 148.

<sup>3</sup> Van Mander. 205. Jean Lemaire, in his *Couronne Margarithique*, says: "Il y survint de *Bruges* maistre Hans." See *postea*, Chap. XIII.

<sup>4</sup> Passavant. *Kunstblatt*, for 1843. No. 62, who cites the following passage from Marc Van Værnewyk's *Historie van Belgie*, Ch. 60, p. 133: "Item die Stadt Brugghe is verciert in des Deutschen Hans Schilderien." We might also cite Schnaase's *Niederländische Briefe*, Boisseree (S.) and Fortoul.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, Mr. W. H. Weale in *Le Beffroi*. II. 213.

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Theodore Fivel, the architect of Chambéry, has found numerous documents in the archives of the House of Savoy

Without pretending to decide which of these theories is correct, we may observe that a strong ground for believing that Hans Memling is a native of Flanders lies in the fact that his pictorial education, and the form of art which he cultivated, are purely Flemish.

It is stated in the Zen manuscript, edited by Morelli, that there was a portrait of Memling by himself, aged 65, in the collection of Cardinal Grimani in 1521.<sup>1</sup> If this statement is correct, we have to remember that Memling died in 1495; and we might calculate that he was born before 1430. Wherever born, Memling was educated in Flanders; and it is consistent with fact as well as circumstantially probable that he learnt the first rudiments of his art at Brussels. Vasari asserts that his master was Roger Van der Weyden,<sup>2</sup> and pictures were extant in the 16th century which could only have been executed by the joint labour of both;<sup>3</sup> and though we have no evidence but that which style and handling afford, we should say that there

which prove the existence of a painter named Johannes, son of Jehan de Liège, appointed architect of the "Conté" of Savoy by Bonne de Bourbon in 1383. This Johannes is recorded to have painted for the court of the counts of Savoy from 1429 till 1431, and to have held the office of "pictor domini." Mr. Fivel believes that this Johannes is identical with Hans Memling; but he has the chronology of Memling's life against him, and Johannes of Chambery is not proved by the documents to have painted anything but banners and the like. We are bound to express to Mr. Fivel our thanks for kindly communicating the documents in question.

<sup>1</sup> Morelli's *Anonimo*, u. s., 75.

<sup>2</sup> Vasari. XIII. 148.

<sup>3</sup> Item. "Ung Dieu de pitié estant es bras de nostre Dame ayant 2 feulletz dans chascuns desquels il y a ung ange, et dessus les dits feulletz il y a une Annunciade de blanc et de noir.—Fait le tableau de la main de Rogier et les dits feulletz de celle de maitre Hans." Extract from the inventory of pictures of Margaret of Austria (1524) in de Laborde, *Revue archéologique*. 1850. p. 56. See also Le Glay. Maximilien I. et Marguerite d'Autriche. II. 480.



are pictures now in existence" which prove this cooperation.<sup>1</sup>

At what time Memling may have entered Van der Weyden's atelier; how long he may have remained there as an apprentice or a journeyman, are questions to which we can find no satisfactory reply. It has been handed down to us on authority still requiring confirmation that Memling, in 1450, painted a likeness of Isabel Duchess of Burgundy.<sup>2</sup> A portrait with the date of 1462 is still preserved in which critics have declared that they detected the hand of Memling;<sup>3</sup> but there is quite as much reason to doubt the correctness of the first statement as there is to reject the opinions of the critics; and it is unfortunately true to say that no picture earlier than 1470 can, at present, be connected with the name of Memling.

No Flemish painter of note produced pictures more attractive to the Italians than Memling. Cardinal

<sup>1</sup> See antea in Van der Weyden.

<sup>2</sup> Anonimo. ed. Morelli, u. s., p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> This is probably the portrait in the collection of Zuanne Ram described by the Anonimo as Van der Weyden's portrait by himself. (Anon. 78.) It was lately in Mr. Roger's Gallery, and once the property of Mr. Aders, and is neither by Van der Weyden nor Memling. Yet Mr. Passavant said of it, "It should be the portrait of Memling himself as he appeared in the hospital. No one in Bruges knew of it; nor does Descamps mention it. It is painted quite in the style of Memling, and I doubt not from his hand. If it be admitted that it represents himself, the wounded arm (?) and the date, 1462, determine when Memling was in the hospital."—*Kunstreise*, p. 94. It is necessary to observe that all authorities, from Descamps upwards, have fixed the date of Memling's illness as 1477. The dress of the portrait is not so much a costume peculiar to the Hospital of St. John as one common to the period. In the Adoration of the Magi, by Memling, a spectator is depicted with a long beard and an orange cap. This is said to be the portrait of Memling in the hospital dress—a different one from that of the portrait of 1462. Vide notice des tableaux de l'hôpital de Bruges, u. s., p. 37. See also postea in Dierick Bouts.

Grimani at Venice collected no less than four of his portraits, and a larger number still of his triptychs.<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Bembo possessed one of his diptychs dated 1470, representing the Madonna and St. John the Baptist;<sup>2</sup> and it is curious that a fragment of it in the Munich Gallery should be the earliest extant specimen of the master. It would be difficult to find a panel more delicately wrought or one more carefully finished in Memling's manner. The Baptist in a red mantle and camel's hair jerkin is seated on a rock, pointing to the lamb on the grass, and on the skirts of a distant wood, a deer has stopped to drink. This is the work of a man with settled habits of execution, familiar with all the tricks of his art and capable of holding a high rank amongst the craftsmen of his age;<sup>3</sup> it prepares us for the mastery which we discern in one of the greatest productions of that time—the Last Judgment of Dantzig.

The Last Judgment of Dantzig is one of the numerous creations of Flemish art commissioned in Belgium on Italian account. It was painted before 1473, and shipped at Bruges with other goods consigned to houses for which the Portinari were agents. The causes which led to its transfer to Dantzig are as curious as they are interesting to Englishmen. For reasons which it is needless to explain, Edward the

<sup>1</sup> Anonimo, u. s. This writer quotes in addition to the two portraits above named, "Two portraits of a man and his wife," and many pictures of Saints "with wings" all by "Memelino." (p. 76.)

<sup>2</sup> Anonimo, u. s., p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Munich Pinakothek. Cabinets, No. 105. Wood, m. 0.30 h. by 0.24. A forged inscription in gold letters runs: "H. V. D. Goes, 1472." There is no better ground for assuming that this picture is identical with that in the Bembo collection (Anonimo. 17) than the description of the Anonimo, which here exactly fits, and the obvious authorship of Memling.

IVth, in 1468, imprisoned all the German merchants of the Stahlhof in London, and confiscated their property.<sup>1</sup> The people of Lübeck replied to this affront in 1469, by prohibiting the import of English broad-cloth; the people of Dantzic accepted it as a declaration of war and issued letters of marque against all British traders. Fleets of privateers and men of war were equipped on both sides, and several engagements were fought in which the fortune of war alternately favoured both parties. A French derelict used by the Dantzigers as a war galley in the first period of hostilities was sold in the winter of 1472 to a company of merchants, who fitted her as a privateer and hoisted the Dantzic flag under the command of a noted captain named Benecke.<sup>2</sup> On the 10th of April 1473, Paul Benecke received intelligence which induced him to weigh for a beat off the Swin. There lay at the time in the harbour of Sluys an armed galley of considerable tonnage, the *St. Thomas*, a British built ship, purchased, it was said, by English merchants as a French prize, and chartered by Thomas Portinari and other Florentines of Bruges for a voyage to London. She was laden with cloths, linen, alum, peltry, spices, and arras to the value of 60,000 Flemish pounds,<sup>3</sup> partly consigned to London, partly to Florence and Pisa;<sup>4</sup> and amongst the packages on board was a triptych of considerable value.<sup>5</sup> To insure the freight against capture, the ship was

<sup>1</sup> Caspar Weinreich's *Danziger Chronik*, herausgegeben und erläutert von Theodor Hirsch und F. A. Vossberg. 4<sup>o</sup>. Berlin, 1855. p. 5.

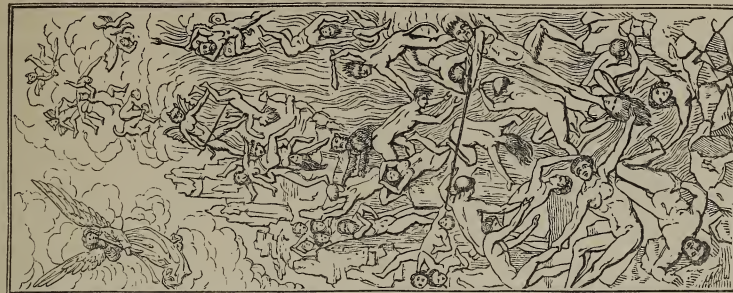
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Beilage I. pp. 93-5.

<sup>3</sup> Weinreich's *Chronik*, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Declaration of Portinari's agent Spinelli, dated 1473, in Beilage I to Weinreich's *Chronik*, p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> Weinreich's *Chronik*, pp. 13, 14, and extracts in notes to the same from Melmann's *Chronik* and the small Melmann's *Chronik*.





THE LAST JUDGMENT. By Memling, in the Cathedral of Danzig.





registered in the name of Thomas Portinari, commissioned by a French captain, and navigated under the Burgundian flag.<sup>1</sup> A consort of smaller tonnage but likewise laden with rich produce accompanied the St. Thomas. As the two vessels left the port of Sluys they were sighted and followed by Paul Benecke who attacked the St. Thomas near Southampton, forcing her to strike after killing and wounding a hundred and fifteen of the crew.<sup>2</sup> There is every reason to believe that doubts arose in the minds of the captors whether they would not be charged with piracy on the high seas. They were careful not to take their prize into Dantzic; they were refused a berth in the waters of Hamburg; and it was almost a mere chance that they were enabled to bear up for Stade, which belonged to the Archbishop of Bremen.<sup>3</sup> There the cargo of the St. Thomas was unloaded and disposed of to the great anger of Charles the Rash, and to the great discomfiture of the Florentines. The Duke of Burgundy made strenuous efforts to obtain redress; Julian and Lorenzo de Medici, for whose benefit some of the goods and possibly the altar-piece had been shipped, moved Sixtus the IVth, to issue a bull threatening his "beloved son the pirate Benecke" with all the penalties of excommunication;<sup>4</sup> correspondence was exchanged for years between the Hanse Towns and Bruges, but

<sup>1</sup> Letter of the Deputies of the 4 Leden of Flanders, dated Utrecht, March 5, 1474, in Notes to Beilage I, of Weinreich's Chronik, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. ib., and bull of Sixtus IV, notes to p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> The councillors of Dantzic to the council of Dantzic, dated Hamburg, June 22, 1473, in Beilage II. to Weinreich's Chronik. p. 118.

<sup>4</sup> The bull is in extract, in notes to Beilage I. of Weinreich's Chronik, p. 102. Sixtus the IVth calls Benecke "Dilectus filius Polus Behenk perrata maritimus."

without avail. The three merchants who fitted the caravel under Benecke's command were patricians of Dantzic and members of the brotherhood of St. George, whose chapel was in the principal church of their native city. No doubt through their agency the triptych of the Last Judgment came to adorn the altar of St. George in the Cathedral of Dantzic.<sup>1</sup>

On the outer face of this triptych there are two portraits of a surprising realism, one, a bareheaded man whose form is completely shrouded in a black pelisse with sable lining, the other, a female in a red gown with white silk slashes and ermine trimming. It is difficult to judge of the character of the man's head, which is in part concealed by repaints. The lady is handsome and youthful, with a high forehead, a small but regular nose, light eyebrows, and eyeballs like sloes. A delicate white head-dress fringed with gold and sprinkled with pearls falls on the bosom and shoulders; a pearl necklace adorns her snowy throat. Both male and female kneel in prayer, in dress of angular and scanty fold,—the first, at the foot of a plinth supporting a statue of the Virgin and Child,—the second, in front of a statue of St. Michael contending with the dragon. A shield affixed to the plinth near the shoulders of the man is emblazoned with a lion sable on a field or, with a bar sinister azure; a similar shield on the plinth near the lady bears a lion or, on a field gules, with a bar sinister azure sown with three pincers, and a scroll round a compass in the upper left hand corner inscribed with the words: "Pour non falir." It has been suggested that the arms of the man are those of the Counts of Flanders, whilst those of the lady point

<sup>1</sup> Weinreich's Chronik, pp. 13, 14, and Beilage I. to the same. p. 100.

to the families of the Counts van Voerne in Holland, or Branda-Castiglione in Italy; but these are mere conjectures. The name of the master who painted the likenesses is undoubtedly Memling, and the date of his work is necessarily antecedent to April 1473.<sup>1</sup>

The subject which Memling has depicted is that which Van der Weyden used in the altar-piece of Beaune; it is also composed on Van der Weyden's lines. In a golden sky spanned by a rainbow the Saviour sits in judgment, resting his feet on a brazen orb; long fair locks and a thin pointed beard inclose a face of oblong shape, heavy bone, and moody glance; the two-edged sword and the lily on the gold ground symbolize the word and the purity of faith. Four angels with the emblems of the Passion tell of Christ's sufferings and agony on earth; clouds of sable hue and silver edge circling round the rainbow, support the heavenly Judgment-seat. As Christ with one hand blesses the happy, and with the other curses the wicked, he bares the livid flesh of a lean and haggard frame scantily draped in a crimson cloak, the cornered

<sup>1</sup> Weinreich's, *Chronik*, pp. 13—14, contains the following passage: "Auff dieser galeide ist die taffel gewesen, welche auff S. jorgens junkern altar gesetzt ist, ein schön, aldes, Kunstreiches Molwerk vom jüngsten tage. Do sol unden bei des engels rechtem flügel geschrieben sein des meister's namen: jacob und: ANNO DONI CCCLXVII." There are traces now of the five last ciphers of this inscription. But the picture is too clearly of the 15th century and too clearly Memling's to allow us to give weight to the hear-say of Weinreich. Pity that though he began his *Chronicle* in 1489 he should not have examined the picture himself. We may observe that in the course of the present century the altar-piece of Dantzic has been ascribed to John Van Eyck, Van der Goes, and Albert van Ouwater. Hinz (*Das jüngste Gericht in der St. Marienkirche zu Danzig*. 8°. Danzig, 1863) quotes amongst the authorities against the authorship of Memling one of the writers of these pages (p. 42.), but he labours under a complete misapprehension, both, when they saw the picture, having assigned it to Memling.

breaks of which are hanging in simple realism on the rigid arc of the rainbow. To the left the Virgin, aged and pale, gazes into space, her forehead and neck concealed in the numerous puckers of a white veil covering her neck and hair; in varied attitudes and shades of melancholy thought, six apostles headed by St. Peter kneel serenely on the clouds. To the right in like array, St. John the Baptist heads the rest of Christ's disciples, gazing or communing with each other, as the Seraphs beneath the mist summon the dead to Judgment. At the sound of the last trump, the happy and the wicked rise from their graves; and as St. Michael with peacock wings and bright gilt armour weighs the souls on the foreground, the condemned are divided from the blest. The disks of St. Michael's balance are loaded with two human beings symbolizing the poles of good and evil; and as the blissful one crouches in prayer, and tilts the plate on which the sinner writhes, the dart of the Archangel pricks the evil one, who struggles with downcast head to join his companions as they flee pursued by imps into eternal fire. To the left the souls awaiting judgment express their doubts and fears in changing expression; others have past the ordeal, and transfigured by joy, they move with prayerful thankfulness towards the abode of bliss to which a sinner has only wandered that he may be repelled by the staff of an angel and grasped by the claws of a demon. The gates of Paradise on the left wing are figured by a splendid Gothic portal, to which there is a noble ascent by steps, in the pinnacles of which Cherubs sing their pæans. St. Peter guards the steps up which the crowd ascends attended by angels who distribute celestial raiment. The depths of Satan's kingdom are mouths of furnaces opening

out of rocky precipices into which the evil ones are hurled, or drawn by imps. Despair is in the faces; agony in the frames of the sinners, and the varied forms of suffering are as cleverly suggested by action and expression, as those of bliss and joy by a winning calmness of contentment in the faces and movements of the happy.

In this grand altar-piece, which has suffered to a painful extent from the effects of time and injudicious restoring, Memling shows himself a true disciple of the school of Brussels, and a pure follower of Flemish tradition. The stern melancholy which characterized Van der Weyden falls like a bequest of the past on the gentler soul of his pupil, and becomes tempered by a milder serenity. Without altering much in the grand lines of a composition modelled for subsequent generations by the great master of Tournai, Memling displays a novel skill in grouping and drawing. He is unequal; he stumbles over some difficulties of proportion; but he often displays an advanced acquaintance with the anatomy of form. Like many Flemings he confounds moodiness with gravity; his figures of Christ and apostles are never transfigured to superhuman beauty; his Virgins and saints are no more ideals of form than ideals of expressiveness; there is overweight of head and undersize of shoulders and torso; but some faces,—a Baptist or Evangelist,—attract by pleasing gentleness, and a dignified air; and the melancholy quiet or passionless regularity of feature in St. Michael is unsurpassed in any Belgian picture of the time. Amongst the nudes of sinners there are many which repel us by their violent contortions. Amidst the nudes of the elect there are a few which tell of close adherence to the faulty reality of the model; but there



are many of the first that are well foreshortened and designed, and many of the second distinguished by elegance of shape and grace of contour. Peculiarly characteristic of the master's idiosyncrasy is the wide and open forehead, scanty eyebrow, and broad drooping eyelid in women.—More than any other artist of his age Memling in the altar-piece of Dantzic produces effect by atmosphere and vivid contrasts in large divisions of light and shade. Chiaroscuro as applied to the relief of solitary figures is more developed than we find it in the works of Van der Weyden; but the habit of Belgian artists was to veil the sun, and so in Memling there are no projections of shadow, and no concentrated floods of rays on any part of any one personage. In a picture with so little drapery as this it may be difficult to find Memling's true conception of cast and fold in dress; yet there is enough to show that he loved a scanty simplicity of stuff, and the absence of innumerable breaks and angles in mantles and tunics is an advantage not to be lightly undervalued. The colours in the upper part of the triptych are laid on so sparingly that they never conceal entirely the run of the contours nor the lines of the inner forms; the result is a little hardness and want of air. This thinness of surface tone is tempered in the foreground figures by greater delicacy of touch; and there is a charming though somewhat pallid transparency in flesh which tells not merely of a very fine feeling but of very considerable technical skill. No doubt there was a time when the whole piece was more attractive than it is now. There was a time when probably no trace was to be found of the ruthless hand which first rubbed off the surfaces, and then covered them with retouches; but that is a distant time; and it is apparent that on

several occasions it was thought advisable by the patrons of St. George's altar to proceed to measures of restoration.<sup>1</sup>

A curious proof of the level to which the taste for pictures was developed at Dantzig in the 15th century is afforded by the general assumption that the altarpiece of the Last Judgment was executed in a previous age.<sup>2</sup> Such an assumption might and probably did prevent inquiries from being made as to the author of so fine a work. The protracted effort made by Portinari to wring indemnity from the Dantzigers would tend to show that he and his Florentine colleagues were better cognizant of the value of the treasures they had lost; and if this effort was due in any way to the desire for recovering the price of an

<sup>1</sup> Dantzig Cathedral. Wood, centre m. 1.74 h. by 1.24, wings, 1.74 h. by 0.62. This picture has frequently been an object of desire to wealthy lovers of art. The Emperor Rudolph, says Mr. Hinz, offered 40,000 gulden for it, the elector of Saxony 20,000 Thaler, and Peter the Great of Russia endeavoured in vain to purchase it of the city of Dantzig. Lenoir, Napoleon's director of art affairs, caused it to be removed to Paris in 1807. It was given up again at the peace, and since then efforts were made by the Prussian government to place it in the Museum at Berlin. It was proposed that in addition to a sum of 20,000 Thalers a copy of Raphael's Sistine Madonna should be given in exchange for it, but this offer was rejected. The picture was first restored at Dantzig in 1718 by the painter Julius Christoph Krey, and in 1815 by Professor Bock at Berlin. In 1851 it was again restored by Prof. Keller, whose principal object was to remove what his predecessors had added to the painting. The head of the elect in the balance was found to have been completely removed and repainted, and under it was a silver-plate let into the wood. It will be recollected that the guilds carefully provided that no knots should be left in panels. It seems as if the silver-plate in question had been let in to cover the place of a knot. More particularly injured are the following parts: The face of the Archangel Michael, by removal of glazes and retracing of lines to deepen the shadows. St. Peter on the left wing, whose red mantle is almost rubbed down to the preparation. The angels blowing trumps by repaints. The rest of the picture is all more or less affected by flaying and retouching.

<sup>2</sup> See note, antea, p. 261.

altar-piece of great attractiveness, we should have evidence of a considerable nimbus encircling the name and talents of Memling. That Memling, in 1470—3, was a man of acknowledged fame at Bruges might be inferred with as much plausibility as that he was a favourite with Italian patrons. To argue on the other hand from the despatch of some pictures to Italy or the presence of others in Italian galleries that the painter was personally acquainted with Italy is hazardous; and if we bear in mind that certain pictures adorned with so-called reminiscences of Rome and Venice are erroneously attributed to Memling,<sup>1</sup> we shall find the argument more illogical still. It might have happened that when Van der Weyden wandered to Ferrara and Rome, he took Memling with him as varlet or apprentice, but there are many reasons to be adduced against the probability of such a thing. An old master might spend a year, as Van der Weyden did, in Italy without altering his style. It would be natural to find a trace of Italian influence in the works of a younger man; and the absence of any influence of this kind in Memling's works is conclusive against his visit to Italy.<sup>2</sup>

Amongst original documents of various dates which illustrate Memling's life, some, as old as 1480, prove that he was possessed of land and houses in the city of Bruges; others show that he was a married man, and father of several children.<sup>3</sup> It is not beyond the

<sup>1</sup> See postea as to Memling's views of Rome in the Shrine of St. Ursula, and compare Michiels (u. s. II, 293) as to the "Venetian horses" in the Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus, which is by Bouts. See also postea in Bouts.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Notice des tableaux de l'hôpital de St. Jean à Bruges, u. s., p. 9. Michiels (A.) Histoire de la peinture Flamande et Hollandaise. 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. II. 293, and others.

<sup>3</sup> See postea.

range of probability that an artist impoverished by sickness in 1477, should have married and risen within three years to a position of comparative opulence, but the earnings of a painter would scarcely have helped him to this position; and we know enough of the prices paid to artists to enable us to affirm that such a piece of fortune could hardly have befallen Memling. There are, however, more positive grounds than these, even if we exclude the evidence afforded by the history of the Dantzic altar-piece, for supposing that our artist lived at Bruges before 1477.

In 1477, Willem Vrelandt or Wyelandt, a neighbour of Memling at Bruges, and an artist not unknown as a miniaturist,<sup>1</sup> held a position of trust in the booksellers' guild at Bruges, and contributed his share to a fund for the purchase of an altar-piece ordered of Memling for the booksellers' chapel. There are records extant telling of specific charges made for the framing and woodwork of the picture, and a final payment for the whole of it in 1478.<sup>2</sup> We have a description of this work in an inventory of 1499, which speaks of the "altar-table with four wings by Master Hans, including

<sup>1</sup> A. Pinchart, Annotations, u. s., p. CCXLIII, and Weale in *Journal des Beaux Arts*. 1861. p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> 1477. "Item, gegeēne den scrinewerke te wet II s. voor tcas-syn van onse taefle, en III s. g. vande duerkins dien ic Meest. Hans hebbe gheleed vande ghilde weghe. V. s. g."

"Itē vā ij letzins daer de duerē mede ghehangē zyn bet."

"It., verleet tot Willē Vrelat als de duerkins van ose taefle warē Meest Hans besteit te makene. XIIg."

"Itē, noch. bet. de scrinewerkē van 2 and. duerkins. III s. g."

"Itē, bet. Meest Hans op de 2 duerkins die hy heft vā ons te makene 1 l. gr."

1478. "Itē. gegeven Meestre Hans al samen in een III lib. II sch."—*C. Carton*, *Annales de la Soc. d'Emulat. de Bruges*. Tom. V, 2<sup>e</sup> Ser. p. 331, and Weale, u. s., 1861. p. 53.



the portraits of Willem Vreland and his wife;"<sup>1</sup> and though it has been thought that this masterpiece was lost, we may find a clue to its existence in an inventory of the booksellers' guild, which registers a picture of "the seven griefs of Mary" in 1619, and notes its sale in 1624.<sup>2</sup> There is no statement here, it is true, as to the painter of "the seven griefs of Mary;" but the fact that Memling produced a panel with portraits of a male and female donor, for a chapel in which we subsequently find the "seven griefs," and the fact in addition, that there is a picture of the "Seven Griefs" by Memling in the Gallery of Turin, on the foreground of which a donor and his wife are kneeling, all lead to the conclusion that the panel of Turin is that which Memling painted for Willem Vrelandt. What became of the wings is a mystery, but not quite an impenetrable one. There are numerous altar-pieces by Memling in existence of which the centres alone are preserved; and some of the most beautiful of his panels are wings of altar-pieces the centres of which have disappeared.

Independently of all such considerations the "Seven griefs" of Turin is one of Memling's productions which has prominent interest for the historian of Flemish art;<sup>3</sup> it is one of the curious examples of the way in

<sup>1</sup> 1499. Noch bovendien huerlieder autaer tafle metten vier dueren daer aen zynde daer Willem Vreland ende zyn wyf zaligher gedachte in ghecontrofeit zyn, ghemaect by der hand van wylen Meestre Hans."—*C. Carton, Annales de la Soc. d'Emulat. de Bruges*, Tom. V. 2<sup>e</sup> Ser. Nos. 3, 4, p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> A. Pinchart, *Annotations*, u. s., p. CCXLIV.

<sup>3</sup> Turin Mus. Wood, 0.55 h. by 0.90. This panel was saved from the plunder of the Dominican convent of Bosco near Alessandria in Piedmont at the time of the French revolution, and subsequently presented to the king. (See J. M. Callery's "*La Galerie Royale de peinture de Turin*." 8<sup>o</sup>. Havre, 1854. p. 146). It has been considered by Dr. Waagen to be the picture of the



which the system of compressing numerous gospel incidents into one landscape was transmitted to the 15th century; and no more curious instance can be cited of the preservation of a tradition traceable through Van der Weyden to the carver guildsmen of Tournai. The story of the Passion begins in the furthest distance of the landscape with the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem; we then see the Saviour in the house of the Pharisee, and partaking of the last supper with his disciples. Outside the walls of Jerusalem, and nearer the spectator, Jesus is tracked by Judas and his band, betrayed and brought before Pilate; then comes the flagellation, the march to Golgotha, the crucifixion, the descent from the cross, the resurrection, the descent into limbus, the appearance to the Magdalen, and the supper at Emmaus.—There are hundreds of figures in this wonderful miniature—all of them delicately finished and brilliantly coloured; and our surprise increases in a natural proportion as we take in successively the beauties of detail in each episode. But as a whole, and though the portraits are miracles of realism, we cannot fail to discover that art in this path is falling away from great principles, sacrificing unity, composition, and massive effect to the comparatively small aim of telling a consecutive story.—We shall presently see that the Flemings showed a decided prepossession for this form of art, and so learn to attribute to the public the taste which might otherwise be supposed to be Memling's.

It was about the time of the completion of the altar-piece of the booksellers that Memling produced

Passion belonging to the Portinari and Duke Cosimo, noted by Vasari (I. 163, and XIII. 148.), by Passavant (*Kunstblatt*. No. 62. 1843) to be Memling's picture once at Careggi. (Vasari, I. 163.)

the wonderful marriage of St. Catherine, which is described in the opening of the present chapter. It was doubtless commissioned by the hospitallers, when Memling was a prosperous craftsman at Bruges, and there are some though not quite conclusive, grounds for thinking that it was finished in 1479. As a work of art it may be considered quite as characteristic as the Last Judgment of Dantzig, and being more thoroughly authenticated we should take it as a representative piece from which to judge of the peculiarities of the master's style. Here again the main incident of Catherine's espousals is but one of a series of episodes forming the whole context of the picture.—The landscape is filled with small scenes illustrating the lives of the Baptist and Evangelist; some of which—like the dance of the daughter of Herodias—are finished compositions of the most elaborate kind. Placed where they are they divert the eye, and throw the principal subject out of focus; and yet there is no subject more worthy in itself of concentrated examination than that of the Espousals. Symmetry, which marks every form of arrangement in Memling's pictures, verges so completely on constraint, as to suggest a partial paralysis of will and motion in the attitudes or movements of the *dramatis personæ*, but some of the groups, and essentially the group of Mary holding the Child with charming grace towards the kneeling Catherine, are admirable. The same constraint in the episode of the decollation inevitably results in affectation and stiffness; and were it not that a great number of the figures in the Vision of Patmos are reduced by perspective to the smallest size, we might have to notice a similar defect in that portion of the picture also. Be this as it may, there is no doubt much more free-

dom and movement in horse and man in the right wing, than there is in any other part of the altar-piece. The Virgin, St. Catherine, and St. Barbara are models of that slender form of womanhood which Memling inherited from Van der Weyden; the faces are long, the necks swan-like, the shapes divested of redundant flesh; but chaste and maidenly elegance of carriage, and serene modesty in features chiselled to a beauty of simple openness, reveal a fund of delicacy in Memling which is not to be found in any other painter of the time in Flanders. To charms of this character the master sometimes superadds a winning expression and select cast of features; and this is peculiarly visible in the head of an angel playing the harp near the Virgin's shoulders. When we turn to such impersonations as those of the Baptist and Evangelist, we observe how much less suited Memling's genius was to embodiments of masculine force than it was to embodiments of feminine grace. The kindly melancholy and resigned air of the Baptist and Evangelist almost strike us as exaggerated in men; and scanty flesh in shapes of bony make gives but too much prominence to rigidity and unelastic motion.

In male delineation, Memling, requiring to exert the most solid qualities of the draughtsman, shows lack of the highest skill in the representation of play in muscles and articulations or action in arms and legs. His drawing of hands and feet is not quite equal to his drawing of heads. At a distance we are struck with the absence of broad masses of light and shade; there is more colour but little more concentration of light than in Van der Weyden's masterpieces. It would almost seem as if Memling purposely shrank from reproducing nature in sunlight. His shadows are not

nearly so dusky, his lights not nearly so narrow as those of John Van Eyck.—Nor does he work the two into one by breaking gray or blue or red into the transitions; he gets roundness by sheer polish and untiring labour. On close inspection we admire an almost superhuman power of detail; there are wrinkles, folds of flesh, and hairs picked out and realized, with astounding patience; but this realism unaccompanied by strong contrast of chiaroscuro contributes but little to effect, and is almost labour lost. It is probably within the truth to say that Memling's conception of the Infant Christ in the marriage of St. Catherine was the most successful that he ever carried out. The type of Christ's face to which he usually clings is finer than that of Van der Weyden,—gravely expressive, cheerful, and frequently ennobled by sweet intelligence, a broad and open forehead, and a good eye, but the mask often exceeds the natural length, and this defect transferred to the frame and limbs and feet, and being accompanied by protruding articulations, or curved bones, produces a most unfavourable impression. A fair average of proportion, and a most intelligent expression, impart to the Infant in the picture before us its most important charm.—We may study and admire the skill with which the softest and truest chords of harmony are produced by juxtapositions of tints; it is to Memling's natural gift as a chromatic painter that we look to counterbalance his deficiencies in relief and atmosphere; his landscapes of autumnal tone are clear and always bright.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bruges, Hospital. No. 1, centre. Wood, m. 1.74 h. by 1.74. Wings 0.74 h. by 0.80. On the lower framing we read the newly painted inscription which follows: "OPVS IOHANIS HEM-LING. ANNO MCCCCLXXIX", and it is a question whether the picture was not finished earlier than 1479, as the Epiphany of

There are two altar-pieces in the spirit of this great work which claim distinct attention ; one is the Madonna in the collection of Count Duchatel in Paris, the other is the Madonna of Sir John Donne in the Duke of Devonshire's residence at Chiswick. The first to some extent recalls "the Marriage" of Bruges in the figure of the Virgin, and is characterized by the peculiar fitness and mastery of its architectural accessories, as well as by a truthful impress of nature in numerous portraits. To the left St. James, with his head bared in honour of the Virgin, commends to her a donor with six sons, whilst St. Dominick on the right attends a kneeling dame and her thirteen daughters.<sup>1</sup>

The Chiswick Madonna is better preserved, and, if possible, more refined in feeling. It represents the Virgin enthroned in a porch receiving homage from the kneeling Sir John Donne, his lady (in a peaked cap), and their numerous children protected by St. Agnes and St. Barbara. In the landscape outside the porch are a water mill, a miller, a cow, and swans, the favourite distance which adorns Madonnas at the Uffizi and Wörlitz, and a portrait in the Gallery of Antwerp catalogued under the name of Antonello. With his usual grace in depicting slender and highborn womanhood Memling excels in this picture as a painter of dress and accessories ; and none of his creations are more conspicuous than this for the finish and trans-

that year shows a greater advance in technical execution than the Marriage. The figure of the angel playing the harp has been seriously disfigured by retouches. The vision of Patmos is still more damaged by abrasion of the foreground, water, and part of the sky. The outer figures of the donors are extensively cleaned off and retouched.

<sup>1</sup> Paris, Count Duchatel. Wood. The figures are about one third of the life size.



parency of cloths, veils, and ornament. On the side panels of the altar-piece are full lengths of an austere and grave St. John the Baptist and a young and serenely kind St. John Evangelist.<sup>1</sup>

Of more finished execution than the Marriage of St. Catherine, yet apparently of the same date, the Epiphany in the Hospital of Bruges is technically the most perfect production of Memling's early period. It represents the adoration of the Magi, and the presentation in the temple on the same lines as the adoration and presentation of Van der Weyden at Munich, but substitutes the Nativity for Van der Weyden's Annunciation. We may commend this beautiful triptych for its comparative freedom from constraint, for increased vividness of tints and stronger chiaroscuro than is to be found in any of its forerunners. It was composed at the special request of Jan Floreins Van der Rijst, who held the office of gauger in the monastery of St. John, and whom we may still see kneeling in a corner of the Epiphany.<sup>2</sup>

Memling's position in the annals of pictorial history has been hitherto that of a man whose personal character and daily life were concealed in the haze of time. In 1480, we strike the very track of his footsteps, and see him in flesh and blood, a resident at Bruges.

<sup>1</sup> Chiswick. Altar-piece in three parts with figures three quarters the size of life on wood. The arms of the Donnes, not the Cliffords, as once supposed, hang on the capitals of the pillars of the porch. An angel on the left offers a fruit to the infant; another on the right plays the pipes. Near the Baptist a servant looks from behind a door. Some portions of the surface are scaled.

<sup>2</sup> Bruges Hospital. No. 3. Wood; centre 0.58 by 0.47. Wings, 0.25 by 0.47. Signed, "OPUS. JOHANNIS. HEMLING. Dit. werck. dede. maken. broeder. Jan. Floreins. alias Van. der. Riist. broeder. profes. van. de. hospitale. van. Sint. Jans. in. Brugghe. anno. MCCCCLXXIX."

During the war waged in 1479—82, between Louis the XIth of France and Maximilian of Austria, the cities of Flanders were taxed to the amount of 500,000 livres for the purpose of prosecuting hostilities. Bruges raised her share of the contribution partly by taxation, and partly by loans. Of the ten or twenty score of persons who subscribed to the loan, one is registered as Hans Memling the painter. Almost simultaneously we find Memling paying ground rents to the Church of St. Donatian, for two large tenements which he owned in the Vlaminckdam, or, as it is now called, the rue St. Georges at Bruges. An ingenious topographer has had no difficulty in finding the site of the painter's house now built over with modern dwellings.<sup>1</sup>

Of further significance as illustrating Memling's life in 1480, is the statement that he was engaged by the Hospitallers of St. John of Bruges to furnish the plan for a new shrine into which the relics of St. Ursula in charge of the hospital were to be translated.<sup>2</sup> 1480 is also the date of the completion of an altar-piece which Memling executed for the carriers of Bruges, a beautiful panel in the feeling of that of Turin, which is preserved at Munich; it is also the date of several pictures, prominent amongst which are the portraits of the Brussels Museum, the so-called Sibyl, and the Entombment in the Hospital of Bruges.

Though not without characteristic features suggestive of Memling's authorship, the Entombment is so much below the master's usual level that we presume to think it may have been executed in a great measure

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Weale's contributions to the *Journal des Beaux Arts* for 1861, pp. 22. 35. 36. See also an interesting sketch of the life of Memling in *La Plume*, a journal published at Bruges. No. 54, of the year 1871.

<sup>2</sup> Passavant (*Kunstblatt* No. 62 of the year 1843.)

by assistants; but it contains the likeness of Adrian Reims, a young hospitaller at whose request, it is said, Memling afterwards undertook a journey to the Rhine.<sup>1</sup>

The Sibyl Zambetha—a pallid bust of a Flemish damsel, in the high peaked cap of the close of the 15th century, has no personal charms to recommend her; nor has the painter striven to give interest to her plainness by special beauties of colour and relief. A counterpart in size, of the portraits at Brussels, which are known to represent a patrician of Bruges and his wife, a counterpart of these likewise in technical treatment, it bears the date of 1480, and was originally painted for the Hospital of Saint Julien of Bruges. For this hospital it was that the Brussels portraits representing Willem Moreel and Barbara Van Vlaenderberch were executed; and these are reasons of weight, especially if we accept the ciphers on the framing as genuine, for assuming that Memling portrayed three members of the same family at the same period; and yet when we look at each of the three panels in turn, we are struck by a sense of their comparative feebleness, and long to assign them to an earlier period of Memling's practice. The sibyl especially, though handled with extreme delicacy of pencil, and in

<sup>1</sup> Bruges Hospital. No 6. Wood, centre 0.44 h. by 0.36; wings, 0.44 h. by 0.14. The Virgin, Magdalen, and Joseph of Arimathea are waiting at the Saviour's feet, on the right wing is Adrian Reims kneeling; on the left, St. Barbara. On the outer sides are the discovery of the cross and St. Mary of Egypt crossing Jordan. It may be doubted whether the ciphers 1480 on the framing are genuine. The letters A. R. on the edge of the central panel are initials of Adrian Reims' name. This is a theatrical composition with little of the feeling usual in Memling's productions—the Magdalen exhibiting her grief in the contorsive gestures peculiar to Van der Weyden's representations. A red tone prevails throughout; and the landscape is arid, and devoid of the fine qualities of the master. Still, it must be borne in mind that the whole is much damaged by cleaning and restoring.

the thinnest of clear tones, is drawn with such timid accuracy as to suggest a still youthful hand.<sup>1</sup>

Willem Moreel, a patrician of Bruges, descended from a Savoyard family whose letters of citizenship dated from the 14th century, was elected *echevin* of his native city in 1472, and held the office of Burgo-master at Bruges in 1478 and 1483. He subsequently rose to still higher civic dignities, in spite of the marked enmity of Maximilian of Austria. His wife Barbara bore him five sons and thirteen daughters, one of whom is supposed to be the Sibyl of the Bruges Hospital.<sup>2</sup> The portraits of this pair are models of plain burgess simplicity, that of Moreel in a close black dress with copious hair, cut straight along the forehead, that of his spouse in a conical cap, and a dark gown with a collar of pearls.<sup>3</sup>

It is the more necessary to hesitate in assigning the date of 1480 to the Moreel portraits because a larger and more important picture of that year,—“the seven Joys of Mary” at Munich,—exhibits Memling’s art in a later and better form, and shows him to have been at that time more spirited and lively, as well as more careful and minute, and more fully conscious of the pleasure to be derived from vivid colour and crispness of touch.

<sup>1</sup> Bruges Hospital. No. 5. Wood, 0.37 h. by 0.27, from the Hospital of St. Julien. On a cartellino in the upper corner of the picture: “Sibylla Sambetha quæ et persica. an: ante Christ: nat: 2040; below on a scroll: “Ecce bestia conculcaberis. Gignetur Dñs in orbem terrarum, et gremiũ virginis erit salus gentium invisibilis verbũ palpabitur.” Compare Mr. Weale’s genealogy of the Moreel family in *Le Beffroi*, u. s. II. 190. 191.

<sup>2</sup> *Beffroi* u. s. II. 182—5.

<sup>3</sup> Brussels Museum. No. 21 and 22. Wood, m. 0.37 h. by 0.27, originally in Saint Julien of Bruges, subsequently in the Van der Schrieck collection at Louvain at the sale of which they were bought in 1861 for £ 200. Both are seen at an opening through which landscapes are seen; both are in prayer. Their arms are on the backs of the panels. See *Le Beffroi*, u. s. II. 189.

Here, as in the "Seven Griefs," the donors—a man with his son and wife in the dress of burgesses of Bruges—kneel in the foreground of a landscape representing the country round Jerusalem. On various planes the bloodless incidents of the history of Christ, are depicted; foremost, the Nativity, Epiphany, and Resurrection; further back; the angel appearing to the shepherds, the procession of the kings of the East, the visit to Herod, the massacre of the Innocents, and the flight into Egypt; the Maries at the Sepulchre, Christ appearing to the Maries, and parting from his mother, the Ascension, and the Assumption. We feel at once on looking at this picture, the absence of linear perspective and atmosphere; yet the episodes are so complete in themselves, and so cleverly arranged and executed that they produce a deep impression; and the colours are so bright, so clear, and so admirably contrasted that we necessarily yield to a grateful sense of rest. The donors of this beautiful altar-piece are Catherine Van Ryebecke, her son Adrian Bultynck, and her husband Pierre Bultynck, the latter known as a substantial citizen and currier, who served as échevin of Bruges in 1477, 1478 and 1480.<sup>1</sup> It was observed by a local chronicler of the last century, who saw the altar-piece in a chapel of the Church of Notre Dame at Bruges, that an inscription on the framing told how the picture was presented by Pierre Bultynck in 1480, to the guild of curriers with the proviso that a *miserere* and *de profundis* should be recited before it after each mass.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Le Beffroi, u. s. II. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Munich Pinakothek. Cabinets, No. 63. Wood, 0.76 h. by 1.82. This picture is not quite correctly called the "Seven Joys." It was given to the corporation "1479 before Easter" (1480, n. s.) by Pierre Bultynck. (See the inventory of the property of the





THE PASSION.

Altar-piece by Hans Memling, in the Pinakothek of Munich

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In 1482 Memling finished the Annunciation in the collection of Prince Radzivil at Berlin, a picture described by Dr. Waagen, as of very original conception and marvellous delicacy;<sup>1</sup> but he also designed the beautiful portrait of the same date at the Uffizi; and it is not improbable that the two years subsequent to 1480 were spent on works commissioned for Italian patrons.

The portrait of the Uffizi is a very solemn and dignified representation of a man in prayer with his hands joined on a desk, the head full of life, the hands of select shape and colour. It once belonged to the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, and was perhaps part of a diptych or triptych, in which the half length of St. Benedict at the Uffizi was framed.<sup>2</sup> But the best of Memling's pieces at Florence is the Madonna of the

curriers of Bruges in Le Beffroi, u. s. II. 268. In 1780 it was sold for 20 livres to an Antwerp dealer named Van Cock (Ib. ib. 265), and by him sold "without the wings" to Mr. A. L. van den Bogærde, treasurer and burgomaster of the Franc de Bruges. It was sold again to Mr. Goddyn of Bruges in 1799; then to Mr. Imbert, in 1804, on commission for the Empress Josephine, at whose death it came into the Beauharnais collection. Bought by Mr. Nieuwenhuys, who sold it to the Boisserées, the picture came into the gallery of Munich. (See the authorities in Le Beffroi, u. s. 265-6). In Ledoulx's *Lives of Bruges Painters*, MS. of 1795, in the Academy of Bruges (cit. by Weale in *Journal des Beaux Arts*. 1860. p. 154) is a description of the altar-piece as it stood in Notre Dame. On the frame, says Le Doulx, was the following inscription: "Int jaer m.cccc.lxxx zo was dit werck ghegheven de ambochte van de hueidevetters van dheer Pieter Bultync f<sup>s</sup> Joos hueidevetter ende coopman ende joncvrouwe Katelyne syn wyf Godevaert van Riebekes dochtere dies moest de priestere van desen ambochte achter elcke misse lesen eenen miserere ende profundis voor aller zielen."

<sup>1</sup> Waagen's *Kugler's Handbook*. 8<sup>o</sup>. London, 1860. p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Uffizi. No. 769. Wood, bust, life size. No. 778. Wood, life size.. both from S. Maria Nuova of Florence. Otto Mündler, (*Beiträge zu J. Burckhardt's Cicerone*) u. s. p. 28, assigns these two pictures to Hugo Van der Goes; but he gives no reasons for doing so.



Uffizi, in which the Virgin is represented sitting on a throne with the crown poised over her head by two seraphs. A beautiful angel with a viol presents a quince to the infant, whilst his comrade on the other side kneels with a harp in his hand.<sup>1</sup> In a clear landscape like that of the Marriage of St. Catherine at Bruges, or the votive Madonna at Chiswick, the roads and hollows are enlivened by figures of a man and his ass; a mill and bridge span a stream; and swans float on a lake. Chastened arrangement, tasteful shape, jewel-like finish and glow of tone are qualities in this picture which Memling acknowledged to himself by frequent replication. A charming repetition on a small scale of the Uffizi Madonna is in the Duke of Anhalt's country seat of Wörlitz near Dessau.<sup>2</sup>

Of less skill as regards arrangement, but of more expressive force, the dead Saviour in the arms of Mary—a small panel in the Doria Palace at Rome—shows with what exuberance of feeling nature had graced the talent of Memling. It is the passion of Van der Weyden tempered with a current of more sensitive anguish, that we see in the fondness with which the Virgin clams her cheek to that of the Redeemer, whose corpse she strives with the help of the Evangelist to raise from the ground. To the right the Magdalen dries her tears, and a grave personage in prayer kneels—a noble portrait—on the foreground. To great strength and enamel of tone a very delicate

<sup>1</sup> Uffizi. No. 703. Wood, figures  $\frac{1}{3}$ d of life size.

<sup>2</sup> Wörlitz. Wood, 0.56 h. by 0.49. Here there are two men in a boat on a lake, and a rider on a bridge. The heads are relieved by halos of rays. An angel and a saint are in the spandrels of the arch through which the landscape is seen. Pity that the surface should be injured by extensive rubbing.

touch is united, and all the parts are blended to a nicety.<sup>1</sup>

The registers of the guild of St. Luke at Bruges were searched in vain for the name of Hans Memling;<sup>2</sup> and it is no doubt curious that a man of his importance should not have been numbered amongst the craftsmen of the city; but the slightest connection with the court of the Duke of Burgundy would have made him independent of the guilds, and it may be that such a connection existed, though it was not handed down to us even by tradition. But the registers of the guild are not absolutely silent as to Memling; they do not tell of his matriculation, but they tell of that of his pupils; and this in itself is a welcome addition to our knowledge of Memling's life and practice.<sup>3</sup>

In 1484 Willem Moreel, whose portrait had been painted by Memling some years before, engaged the painter to produce an altar-piece for a chapel in Saint Jacques of Bruges. For nearly a century after its completion the triptych, which Memling then completed, was preserved on its original altar; but when the plundering iconoclasts of 1575 began their devastations in the churches of the city, the pictures were

<sup>1</sup> Rome. Palazzo Doria. This little masterpiece is in the same room as Sebastian del Piombo's Doria. It is on Wood, m. 0.67 h. by 0.52. In the distance Golgotha and the thieves on their crosses. The figure of Christ is excessively lean and stiff. The picture is well preserved.

<sup>2</sup> This is correct, unless we accept as beyond cavil the notice of Mr. J. Gaillard in his book, "De ambachten en Neringen van Brugge," in which he cites as member of the corporation of St. Luke: "Joannes Memlinc inkom." 1479. See the passage quoted in Weale, *Journal des Beaux Arts*. 1861. p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Memling's pupils Annekin Verhunnemann and Paschier Van der Meersch matriculated in the guild of Bruges in 1480 and 1483 respectively. Compare Wauters (A.) *Revue des Arts*, u. s. II. 251, and D. van de Castele, *livre d'admission de la gilde de Saint Luc de Bruges*.



removed; and in this way came at last to hang in the civic Museum of the Academy. In the course of their numerous wanderings the panels suffered more injury than others of the same period, but they are still important creations of the master. In the centre piece, St. Christopher carries the Infant Christ across the stream; St. Maur and St. Giles are at his sides; on the wings, Moreel kneels in a landscape with his five sons under the protection of St. William, whilst his wife prays with eleven daughters under the guardianship of St. Barbara. Memling never painted a picture with figures of life-size in which there is less constraint or a cleverer rendering of natural movement; he lavished upon every part the most delicate finesses of his pencil, and the purest enamels of his pallet; and we regret, though in vain that so many of these charms should lie concealed under massive repaints.<sup>1</sup>

The triptych of the Academy is the nearest that we possess in the order of chronology to the diptych of the Hospital of Bruges, painted for Martin van Newenhoven in 1487.

Martin van Newenhoven was a young patrician whose fortune it was, late in life, to hold high office in the municipality of Bruges. His marriage and first election to a shrievalty are historically recorded.<sup>2</sup> He gave the diptych—a masterpiece—to the Hospital of Saint Julien of Bruges; where it remained till the close of the last century. There is no more interesting

<sup>1</sup> Bruges Academy Nos. 4. 5. 6. 7 and 8. Centre. Wood, m. 1.21 h. by 1.54; wings, 1.21 h. by 0.69. On the back of the wings are monochromes of St. George and St. John the Baptist. On the lower edge of the framing are the modern words: "ANNO DNI 1484." Much injured by repainting are the heads of the female children on the left wing. The outlines of the figure of St. John are run over and one of the hands altered altogether.

<sup>2</sup> Notice des tableaux de l'hôpital de St. Jean, u. s. p. 39.

specimen of portrait by Memling extant than this, none more characteristic for the large fair oval of the Madonna's face, or for that peculiar clearness which is so surely produced by scant shadow and spacious, even light. In September of the year in which this beautiful piece was finished, Memling lost his wife Anna, who left him a widower with three young children. We should rejoice to know with equal exactness when he completed his most captivating masterpiece, the lovely shrine of St. Ursula, which for three centuries has been the pride of the Hospitallers of St. John of Bruges.<sup>1</sup>

The shrine of St. Ursula is said to have been ordered at the suggestion of the Hospitaller Van der Rijst during the period of Memling's stay in the sick wards of the monastery.<sup>2</sup> The truth may be that Memling received a commission for it when practising as a painter at Bruges, and had allowances made to him to visit Cologne and other cities on the Rhine. It is said that the sixteen panels of which the shrine is composed were finished in 1486;<sup>3</sup> but there is no record of any other fact than that the relics of St. Ursula were translated to their new receptacle in 1489;<sup>4</sup> and strange to say not once in the numerous records preserved in the

<sup>1</sup> Bruges Hospital, No. 4. Wood. Each of the two sides m. 0.45 h. by 0.34. The Virgin presents the apple to Christ. Through the windows a landscape is seen, in which a man is riding, another walking. Between the two windows a mirror reflects the Virgin and Martin van Newenhoven who, on the second panel, is seen kneeling with a book before him. On the glasses of a window is St. Martin, sharing his cloak. Below, we read: "Hoc opus fieri fecit Martinus D. Newenhoven. Anno D. M̃. 1487 anno verò ætatis 23."

<sup>2</sup> Passavant, *Kunstblatt*, No. 62 of 1843.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib. ib. ib.*

<sup>4</sup> See the proofs of this as well as of the disappearance of all the accounts of the hospital in *La Plume*, u. s. No. 59 of 1871.

monastery is there a single allusion to Memling. We should have thought that a fact of such importance as the adornment of a reliquary, most precious in the eyes of a religious community, would have been chronicled in the journals of the monks; we should have expected to find some allusions in the private papers of the Hospital to the journey which the painter made to the Rhine. In want of these we turn to the panels of the shrine itself, and there we observe that, unless Memling was furnished with views of Cologne by local German draughtsmen, he must have been allowed to make sketches in person. We perceive too that the types of some of his women, and especially the type of a Virgin on one of the shrine gables, or St. Ursula in the shrine cover, are reminiscent of the simple but lovely impersonations which were embodied a century before in the pictures of Meister Wilhelm. Nor is there anything in the state of the Rhenish provinces, between 1480 and 1489, to suggest a cause or impediment why Memling should not have performed with ease the journey which was undertaken about the same time by Hugo Van der Goes.

The legend which Memling now depicted is connected with the revolt of Maximus in Britain,—(A. D. 383)—and the subsequent migration of a part of the British nation to Gaul; yet we must despair to reconcile even this much of chronology with the version of the legend which is usually described as embodied in the shrine of St. Ursula. In some of its broadest features the legend as told by Memling is that which Carpaccio consulted for the series of canvases with which he adorned the school of St. Ursula at Venice; and it may be considered a remarkable coincidence that both painters should have illustrated

the same tale almost at the same time. Carpaccio draws upon his imagination for views of Cologne and the Rhine; he is more accurate in representing Rome. Memling is more true to nature at Cologne and Bâle. His ideal of Rome is a Northern city. The same contrast may be found in the treatment of the two masters—Memling is elegant and tender, Carpaccio forcible and rugged; but Carpaccio composes and paints on a large and imposing scale, whilst Memling reduces the subjects to the smallest compass.

The shrine of St. Ursula is a Gothic chapel in miniature, its long sides being divided into archings containing six episodes, its cover adorned with six medallions; one incident fills each of the gables. In the medallions are the coronation of the Virgin, the glory of St. Ursula, and four angels, on the gables, St. Ursula shelters the band of maidens under her cloak, and the Virgin in a porch is worshipped by two hospital nuns. Of the six designs on the long sides, one represents the fleet arriving at Cologne, where Ursula prepares to land with her companions. We recognize the shape of the old cathedral, the steeples of several churches, and one of the city towers, most of them true to nature but not in their proper places; in one of the distant houses Ursula sees the vision of the Pope bidding her to visit Rome. Another scene is laid on the quays of Bâle, where St. Ursula has taken to the shore, whilst a part of her suite awaits its turn to disembark. A third shows the Pope surrounded by his court in the porch of a church awaiting St. Ursula who kneels on the steps leading up to the portal. In a gallery close by, the British neophytes are baptised and confessed, or partake of the Holy communion. The pope, in the fourth picture, accompanies the

maidens on their return to Bâle; he sits with his cardinals in the vessel which carries St. Ursula, whilst the suite of both still winds through the passes leading from the Alps. On the fifth panel, the back ground is a camp on the Rhine shore, where boats have landed some of their living freight, and others approach with crowded loads; the knights and virgins are set upon by soldiers and are vainly defended by their steelclad champions. The sixth picture is that in which St. Ursula is seen in passive attitude of prayer, awaiting the arrow of an executioner; the men about her armed in proof, or shrouded in mantles, are spectators or actors in the massacre of the saint's companions; and the distance is filled with tents behind which the Kölner Dom rears its solid walls.

The freedom and grace with which these scenes are composed are partly due to the facility with which Memling treated groups and figures of small proportions, but they tell of progress in the art of distribution and arrangement. It would be difficult to select any picture of the Flemish school in which the dramatic personæ are more naturally put together than they are in the shrine of St. Ursula, nor is there a single panel in the reliquary that has not the charm of rich and well contrasted colour. Great delicacy of feeling is shown in suggesting the martyrdom of St. Ursula by its penultimate phase. Excess of northern phlegma or sobriety of action may strike us as a fault; but the absence of exaggerated violence in movement or incident must be acknowledged as an important quality. We might almost fancy that Memling studied the varying types of dwellers on the Rhine, so characteristically diverse are the masks, or so clever and ever changing the features and expression; yet we





DEATH OF ST. URSULA.

From the Shrine by Memling, in the Hospital of Bruges.

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remember that Bruges, at the close of the 15th century was still a mart which people of every clime were wont to visit, and a clever student of physical peculiarities might find variety enough in its quays and streets without leaving the circuit of its walls. A rich fund of life and grace is revealed in shapes of symmetrical proportions or slender make and attitudes of becoming elegance. Nothing is more striking than the minuteness of the painter's touch, or the perfect mastery of his finish, except the patience and accuracy with which he renders reflections or projections of shadow in burnished armour. The tone is bright and for a Fleming even luscious. The sweet harmony and pleasing serenity of female faces are as grateful to the eye as the dignified character of their carriage and mien. "More precious than a shrine of silver, says Van Mander, is Memling's shrine of St. Ursula;"<sup>1</sup> and the taste of our day impels us to say yea to the old historian's sentence.<sup>2</sup>

Before the completion of the shrine, and previous to his death, Memling no doubt executed a considerable number of important works. Numerous collections are graced with masterpieces to which no dates are assigned, yet of such interest and beauty as to

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s., 205.

<sup>2</sup> Bruges Hospital No. 2. Shrine of St. Ursula. Long face. Wood, m. 0.51 h. by 0.91. Gable ends: m. 0.51 h. by 0.33. Van Mander tells of Pieter Porbus that he was a passionate admirer of this little jewel (u. s. 205). In 1794 a French commission appeared at the gate of the hospital and ordered the shrine to be given up. The nuns ingeniously pretending not to know the meaning of the French word "*La Châsse*," declared that they did not know what they were asked to produce and possessed no such thing as a *châsse*. The French commission upon this withdrew, and the shrine of St. Ursula is one of the few works of Flemish artists that were not taken away to Paris. Still it has been injured by cleaning and restoring.

repay the most studious attention. The most conspicuous amongst these are the Marriage of St. Catherine of Mr. Gatteau, and the Flight into Egypt of Mr. Rothschild, in Paris, the Virgin and Child with Saints in the Belvedere of Vienna; the Virgin and Child with a kneeling patrician and patron Saint in the National Gallery, the Christ of Pity, and donors with saints in the Vernon Smith and Heath collections, and single figures of Saints in the Galleries of Paris and the Hague.

Mr. Gatteau's altar-piece is a reminiscence, on a small scale, of that in the Hospital of Bruges. It is very charming in the expression of the heads, and executed with great clearness and minute precision. St. Agnes, St. Cecilia, St. Margaret, St. Barbara and St. Lucy—all models of slender shape and graceful carriage—are prettily grouped round the throne and enlivened by a most delicious landscape.<sup>1</sup> The Flight into Egypt is a smaller but not less attractive specimen of the master's skill, though made up of but three figures.<sup>2</sup> Dismembered and scattered in the rooms of the Belvedere, the Madonna of Vienna is still catalogued under the name of Van der Goes. The Virgin in the centre piece sits on a magnificent throne, the counterpart of that in the Madonna of the Uffizi. An angel with a viol presents the apple to the Infant Christ, whilst the donor, in black and violet, kneels to the right. Inside the wings St. John the Baptist and St. John Evangelist are set in attitudes like those of

<sup>1</sup> Paris. Collection of Mr. Gatteau. Wood, 0.15 h. by 0.26. A small replica of this picture by Mostært is in the Academy of St. Luke at Rome under the name of Memling.

<sup>2</sup> Paris. Rothschild collection. The Virgin rests with the Infant Christ, whilst St. Joseph picks nuts from a distant bush. Wood, m. 0.47 h. by 0.25, from the Aders collection.

similar saints in the "Marriage" at Bruges; outside the wings are monochromes of Adam and Eve. Though injured by abrasion and repainting this is one of Memling's capital productions.<sup>1</sup> Almost equally injured by rubbing is the Virgin and Child of the National Gallery, though time and ill treatment have not as yet obliterated the fine shade of character which dwells in the portrait of the donor and his patron saint St. George.<sup>2</sup>

A very touching expression of grief is realized in the worn frame of the Saviour bewailed by the Virgin, St. John, and the Magdalen, belonging to the Reverend Mr. Heath at Enfield; and there is much power in the figures in the wings representing St. James the elder and St. Christopher;<sup>3</sup> but this altar-piece has less of Memling's delicate charm than the fragment in the same collection, in which a nobleman is seen praying under the protection of St. John the Baptist, who kneels behind him in a meadow, with the lamb, symbolizing the mission of the saint near him.<sup>4</sup> The donor's hands are joined in prayer, his head bare; his

<sup>1</sup> Vienna, Belvedere, second Floor. Room II. No. 6. Virgin and child 0.66 h. by 0.45. No. 10. Wings, 0.66. h. by 0.27. No. 61 outside of wings. Wood 0.66 by 0.20. The head of the donor is injured by old retouching. The same triptych with one exception (St. Barbara being substituted for one of the St. Johns) was once in the gallery of Margaret of Austria (1524). De Laborde, *Inventaire*, u. s., in *Revue Archéologique*, 1850, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> National Gallery. No. 686. Wood, 0.54 h. by 0.37, from the Weyer collection at Cologne. In rear of the throne is a view of the sea with shipping, and on the middleground to the left an angel kneeling and playing a guitar.

<sup>3</sup> Enfield, Revd. Mr. Heath. Small altar-piece.

<sup>4</sup> Enfield, Revd. Mr. Heath. Wood, m. 0.25 h. by 0.15, once in possession of Mr. Herz in London. The arms of the donor are at the base of the picture. The surface of the panel is somewhat flayed, but there is no sign of over-painting. The most injured parts are the sky and landscape, and the head and hands of the patron.



dress is a purple brown mantle, lined with fur. St. John appears in the never-failing skin which leaves his legs bare, and a violet tunic tied in a knot to his shoulder; his left hand rests on the kneeling figure, whilst his right points to the lamb. The meadow in which the group stands is covered with vegetation of the most varied kind; in the midst of which the characteristic leaves of the dandelion and daisy are easily distinguished. The breadth of brush, and boldness of touch, remarkable in this foreground, contrast with the thin and transparent tones of the draperies and flesh-tints; the masterly execution of the whole reveals the painter's best time—the period in which the panels of the Louvre were completed. A broad screen of trees, in front of which a small stream runs, separates the foreground from the usual episodic scenes of the middle and extreme distance; in the depths of the grove are a hare and a couple of deer. At the foot of a rock, surrounded by trees of thin foliage, St. George is killing the dragon, whilst a female figure looks on from a sheltered spot; in the distance, a lake surrounds an island, on which St. John Evangelist sits contemplating the vision; in the heavens, the Virgin, holding the Infant, is comforted by an angel, a dragon with many heads lying at her feet. The thin colour which marks the flesh-tints as well as the draperies of the principal figures is observable also in the execution of the episodes; the head of the Baptist is noble and austere,—a quality in which Memling shows his superiority over his master, Van der Weyden. The figure of St. George on horseback displays certain evidence of a perfect study of nature—the leg being well down in the stirrup, and the action energetic. The episode is so full of life that it has been

frequently copied; it may be found in a miniature once in possession of Mr. Farrer, in London, and it may, doubtless, be discovered elsewhere.

Mr. Vernon Smith's panels belonged at one time to the Rogers collection. They represent an old lady kneeling under the guard of a female saint, and a man protected by St. George;—the portraits are admirable for dignity and expression, the female saint of mild and slender aspect, the armed saint a little less pleasing. The landscapes in both pieces are minute and clear.<sup>1</sup>

Two panels at the Louvre—St. John the Baptist and the Magdalen, are jewels of delicate finish. There is a purity unsurpassed in any work of Memling in the face and shape of the Magdalen; and St. John is less austere than usual. The Baptism of and decapitation are episodes in the landscape of one panel, the meeting at Emmaus is an incident in the distance of the other. St. Stephen and St. Christopher, once in the Royal collection at the Hague, were parts of the same dismembered altar-piece.<sup>2</sup>

Not one of these small and characteristic pieces but shows superior attractions to the larger but less purely original altar-piece of 1491, which adorns a chapel in the Cathedral of Lübeck.

In size the most important of all Flemish productions of the close of the 15th century, this double-

<sup>1</sup> London. Mr. Vernon Smith. Wood, each panel 0.81 h. by 0.30. The skies and some parts of the figures are spoiled by restoring.

<sup>2</sup> Nos. 288, 289, Louvre. Wood, 0.48 h. by 0.12. The first of these panels formed part of Lucien Bonaparte's Gallery, and was engraved as Van Eyck. It subsequently belonged to William the Second of Holland, having been purchased, with its companion, by Baron de Fagel for 11,728 fr. in 1815.

winged triptych suggests more reminiscences of Van der Weyden than any other that Memling ever composed; and it has this marked peculiarity that whereas some parts are executed on the thin surface principle common to the best of his works, the centre is painted in with a solidity of impast foreign to his general habits. On the outer face of the wings there are two slender figures of the Angel and Virgin Annunziata in monochrome; opening these, we observe four saints, large as life, St. Blaise in episcopals, the Baptist, St. Jerom in cardinal's dress drawing the thorn from the lion's paw, and St. Egidius with the deer, all bright of tint, of energetic mien and grave aspect, but disfigured by bad drawing in limb and extremities. Opening these again we come upon the central composition of the crucifixion, flanked to the left by the procession of Christ on the road to Golgotha, to the right by the Entombment and Resurrection. It is here that we miss many of the usual attractions of Memling's pencil; and the workmanship is of such marked inferiority that we wonder whether a touch of Memling's was added to those of his assistants. Our surprise at the solidity and want of transparency of the colouring is only equal to our surprise at the harshness of contrasts in dress tones, the changing hues in folds of stuff, and the broken character of drapery. There is an uncommon fund of vulgarity in the dicers at the right hand corner of the picture, an unpleasant awkwardness in the strain with which two soldiers on foot and horseback guide the lance that pricks the Saviour's side; untrue are the cuts on the legs of the crucified thieves. A curious realism for which we are unprepared strikes us in the figure of a monkey eying a nut, as he sits on the back of a horse and avoids the teasing hand of a grinning

boy. Strange above all is the partial if not complete disappearance of the master's grace and distinguished womanhood in the group of the fainting Virgin.<sup>1</sup>

For four years after the completion of this vast altar-piece Memling's practice was carried on. What he produced in this last period of his existence is hard to tell; but we may say of him at the conclusion of his life that he was the last painter of the Netherlands who preserved the pure traditions of the 14th century. He was the only great artist who really withstood the pernicious influence of those who wandered to Italy to ape but not to assimilate the styles of the masters of the Italian revival; and though he was followed by numerous craftsmen such as David, Bouts, and Massys, who clung to some extent to the principles which they had learnt by his example to respect, he alone preserved what there was of poetry in the quiet and grammatic rather than sublime schools of Flanders. Without the stern power of Hubert, without the grave and measured force of John Van Eyck; with less depth of passionate expression than Van der Weyden; he won applause by creations embodying sensitive grace and purity of feeling, at a time when public morality had sunk to a point of degradation which it had not known in more barbarous and remote periods of history.

On the 10th of December 1495, the trustees of Memling's children appeared before the court for administering the property of wards at Bruges to register

<sup>1</sup> Lübeck Cathedral. Greveraden chapel. The altar-piece is about 8 feet high and proportionately broad. Sketches or small copies of the procession to Golgotha, and the Resurrection and Entombment by pupils of Memling, are numbered 82 in the second floor, room I. of the Belvedere at Vienna, and there assigned to Memling.

the money and lands left to them "at the death" of Hans Memling.<sup>1</sup>

To complete the history of the works of Memling a short statement may be given of the works unnoticed in the foregoing pages; and this may be followed by lists of pieces either not seen by the authors, or falsely assigned to Memling, or missing. We naturally exclude all pictures of a later date than 1495; even though they should be attributed to painters known in countries distant from Flanders such as Jan or Johannes; and in this way we eliminate from the catalogue of Memling's works 1<sup>o</sup>. Scenes from the Life of John the Baptist once in the Spanish convent of Miraflores, described by Ponz as having been executed in 1496—9 by "Juan Flamenco."<sup>2</sup> 2<sup>o</sup>. Eleven paintings by "Juan de Flandes" once in the cathedral of Palencia in Spain;<sup>3</sup> 3<sup>o</sup>. a diptych with the date of 1499 in the Antwerp Museum.<sup>4</sup> 4<sup>o</sup>. A "portrait of Agnes Adornes" dated 1499.<sup>5</sup>

Among the genuine works of Memling hitherto unnoticed the following deserve to be cited:

LONDON. NATIONAL GALLERY. No. 747. St. John the Baptist and St. Lawrence (Wood 0.57 h. by 0.17) very minute and delicately worked, but not free from injury by rubbing.

BERLIN MUSEUM. No. 528<sup>b</sup>. The Virgin and Child, at an opening with a landscape distance, a picture of soft execution with an Infant Christ of wooden shape and stiff action, a bust in half length about one third of the life size.

HAGUE. Late Royal collection. Portrait of a Lady in black with a yellow waistband and a linen cap, inscribed: OBYT AN<sup>o</sup> DM̄. 1479; sold at the sale of the King of Holland's collection, in 1850, for 450 florins to Mr. Brondgeest.

FRANKFORT. STÄDEL COLLECTION. No. 68, from the Aders and Hague collections. Bust of a man in a purple peaked cap, whose

<sup>1</sup> See the record in full in Weale, *Journal des Beaux Arts*, u. s. 1861. p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Ponz, *Viage de España*. Vol. XII. p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> Passavant, *Kunstblatt*. 1843. No. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Antwerp Museum. Nos. 255. 256.

<sup>5</sup> E. de la Coste's life of Anselme. 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1855. p. 312. cit. in Mr. A. Pinchart's *Archives des Arts, sciences et lettres*, 2<sup>e</sup> L. s., I. 266.



hands are crossed on a parapet, dressed in a black pelisse lined with fur; distance a landscape. (Wood, 0.40 h. by 0.30.) This picture is softly coloured in Memling's manner.

MADRID MUSEUM: Triptych (Wood, about 4½ f. by 4.), representing the Adoration of the Magi, between the Presentation in the Temple and the Nativity. The compositions are those of Van der Weyden's altar-piece at Munich. This altar-piece belonged to Charles the Fifth, and is almost a copy of Memling's in the hospital of Bruges. In the central panel some figures are introduced as followers of the Magi,—the donor of the Bruges altar-piece being thus displaced; there is also some variety in the architecture. The greater part exhibits Memling's style and colour, but the figures introduced behind the Magi are treated in a different taste as regards drapery and tone. The angels in the Nativity are much inferior to those of Memling; and it would seem as if the panels were commenced by him, and finished by a pupil. Amongst other things is the head of a spectator at a window—the counterpart of that in the Adoration of the Magi at Bruges, said to be the portrait of the painter. Much of the picture is injured by cleaning.

VIENNA ACADEMY. In this collection is a series of subjects much in Memling's manner. The pictures were bequeathed by the late Count de Lamberg Springenstein, in 1835. One of them (Wood, 2 f. 9 h. square) is the Coronation of the Virgin in correct drawing and of clear colour.—The following are to be classed as doubtful or as works that are not genuine:

HAMPTON COURT. No. 299, long catalogued as by Sir Anthony More, now classed in the school of Memling: a portrait of a man seen to the throat, pallid, careful, and very highly finished.

LONDON NATIONAL GALLERY. No. 709. Wood, 0.40 h. by 0.28.—The subject is the Virgin and Child, and the picture was assigned when in the Wallerstein collection at Kensington to Van Eyck. The painting is much damaged, especially in the figure of the Saviour, which has lost much of its freshness, and is in part retouched, but the manner is that of Memling's school.

SAME GALLERY. No. 710. Now assigned to Van der Goes, but when in the Wallerstein collection attributed to Memling. (Wood, 0.34 h. by 0.27). This is a vivid and truthful portrait, not, however, in the delicate manner so often noticed in other

pictures of Memling. The character of the hands is coarse, which is also strange for Memling. The portrait has suffered a little from cleaning; and the face is less coloured, in consequence, than the landscape and vestments.

HAGUE AND BAUCOUSIN COLLECTIONS. Altar-piece of St. Bertin. This altar-piece, once divided between the two above mentioned collections, was composed of a number of panels forming two wings of a gilt shrine. These wings were of irregular shapes, the upper part being of less dimensions than the lower. The former once belonging to Mr. Baucousin (Wood, 0.52 h. by 1.32) represent figures of singing angels and angels carrying St. Bertin to heaven. The latter represent ten subjects from the life of St. Bertin, in arched framings, ex. gr.: in the first two ecclesiastics in prayer; in the second the birth of St. Bertin; in the third, the saint taking the vows inside a church; in the fourth, on a pilgrimage; in the fifth, on his knees with companions in a mountainous country before a nobleman and his suite. In the sixth, St. Bertin works the miracle of the conversion of water into wine; in the seventh, he preaches; in the eighth, he converses with a bishop; in the ninth and tenth, he dies and receives the last succours of religion.

The portions in the possession of Mr. Baucousin were painted on both sides, but they were so much injured that of the subjects on one face there was but a trace left, and that had been entirely removed; the remainder having also lost a part of its freshness and finish.

These pictures are inferior to the authentic works of the master—particularly in colour and accuracy of design. Memling may have been assisted by his pupils, or even have committed to them the entire execution of the work, which exhibits the variety so easily traced between paintings done by the hand of the master and those of a pupil. M. de Laborde says that, about the year 1500, a certain Dyrick painted for the abbey of St. Omer; and Dyrick may have had a share in the panels under consideration.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> En 1528, on alloûait encore X s. à Dyrick le peintre, qui avoit recollé et repainct de noire une ronde tablette, estant en la sallette hault près de la chambre de M. S. En 1530 ce même artiste faisait payer V livres ung grant tableau, en platte peinture à ung Dieu de pitié, Notre Dame, Sainct Jehan, et demandoit IV s. pour les deux feuillets faicts depuis audit tableau,

DRESDEN MUSEUM. No. 1719. Wood, 0.49 h. by 0.39. This portrait of the bastard Anthoine de Bourgogne is a replica of that in Stafford house (see antea in John Van Eyck), including the motto "Nul nesi frote." The outline is too hard, the impact too heavy for a genuine Memling. The pallid lights are fused into faint shadows by transitions of a greyish red, and the execution generally reveals the same hand as the portrait at Hampton Court; i. e. the hand of a student of the manner of Van Eyck and Memling.

BERLIN MUSEUM. No. 549 A. The Virgin bares her breast to the Infant Christ. This half length, about one third of the size of life, is very much in the style of Memling, but executed with much less of skill and fusion than we expect from him; it must therefore be classed amongst school-pieces.

LONDON. Baring collection. St. Jerom at his desk, ascribed by the Anonimo (p. 74) dubiously to Memling, is not by that master (see antea in John Van Eyck).

LONDON. Dudley House. Half length of a man in a black cap. This is a panel of Memling's school falsely assigned to Holbein, remarkable for stiff motion, pallid flesh and ill drawn hands. The hair hangs heavily to the shoulders.

LONDON. Ex Rogers collection. Virgin and Child (see postea).

MUNICH. Professor Sepp. No. 14 of the Munich International Exhibition of 1869. Marriage of the Virgin (Wood, m. 0.79 h. by 0.41) by a painter of the school of Louvain after the time of Dierick Bouts.

FRANKFORT. Mr. Gontard. No. 53 of the Munich International Exhibition. Half length of the Virgin giving the breast to the Infant, from the Pourtalès collection (Wood, m. 0.31 h. by 0.22) by the same hand as Professor Sepp's Marriage of the Virgin.

MUNICH. Mr. Rauter. No. 23 of the Munich International Exhibition. Philip the 1st of Spain (Wood, m. 0.44 h. by 0.33).

auquel a paint en toile les armes de l'église et de M. S.—*De Laborde, u. s.*, Introd. p. 45. This is doubtless the same painter of whom we learn (private communication from Mr. Weale) that he was called Dyrick de Berle and painted (1525) the Coronation of the Virgin above the portal of the abbey church of St. Bertin.

This panel is retouched and modernized by a painter of the 16th century.

STUTTGART MUSEUM No. 398. Bathsheba in the Bath. This picture was assigned by Dr. Waagen to Memling (Handbook, I. 99), but is apparently by a later hand and perhaps of the school of Massys.

ANTWERP MUSEUM. No. 253. Wood, 0.39 h. by 0.23. Portrait of a canon of St. Norbert. This portrait, acknowledged by Waagen (Handbook, p. 100) as a Memling, cannot be accepted as anything more than a work of one of Van der Weyden's pupils.

ANTWERP MUSEUM. No. 254. Portrait of a member of the family of Croy. Wood, 0.49 h. by 0.31. Here again we have according to Waagen (Handbook, p. 101) a Memling. The panel is by a later hand and by a follower of the school of Van der Weyden.

PARIS. Palais de Justice. The crucifixion. For this piece acknowledged by Waagen (Handbook, p. 96) as a Memling, see antea in Van der Goes.

BRUGES ACADEMY. Nos. 27—31. The Baptism of Christ. (See postea in Gheerardt David).

GREENHITHE. The Reverend J. Fuller Russell. Diptych with the crucifixion on one side, and on the other a kneeling figure of Jeanne de France in prayer, under the protection of John the Baptist. In the sky is a vision of the Virgin and Child, and on the meadow in front of Jeanne an angel holding her scutcheon. This picture is assigned to Memling; and there are many heads in the crucifixion which might confirm the correctness of this view; but the treatment generally is more like that of a pupil of Memling than that of Memling himself. The diptych is small, and the figures are highly finished.

MUNICH, Pinakothek, Cabinets No. 51. A head of Christ. This copy of Van Eyck's Christ of 1438, at Berlin, is now properly catalogued as such. Same collection Cabinets No. 52. Ecce Homo, once catalogued as Memling, is now suitably described as a picture of the school of Massys.

LONDON. Mr. J. W. Brett. At the sale of this collection in 1864, the Adoration of the Magi from the Northwick gallery was sold for £ 447. It is called a Memling by Waagen (Treasures III. 206), but is a picture of the 16th century.

WIESBADEN MUSEUM. No. 9. The Salutation, has no claim whatever to the name of Memling.

ST. PETERSBURG. Hermitage. No. 445. Wood, 0.92 h. by 0.56. St. Luke painting the likeness of the Virgin, from the Hague collection, is an old copy of Van der Weyden's picture in the Pinakothek of Munich.

Amongst the pictures not seen by the authors are the following.

PARIS. LOUVRE (not catalogued). Virgin giving the breast to the Infant Christ, bought at the sale of the Germeau collection in 1868 for 12,100 francs. (See *Chronique des Arts* for 1871. Nos. 3 and 10).

PARIS. LOUVRE. The Resurrection, Mary, the apostles, and St. Sebastian; bought at the Vallardi sale in 1860 for 13,500 fcs. as a Memling, now classed in the Flemish school of the 15th century, and "in petto" assigned to Bouts. (See O. Mündler in *Zeitschrift für bild. Kunst*. II. 223, and *Journal des Beaux Arts* for 1861. p. 11.)

FLORENCE, San Donato coll. In this collection there was a St. Veronica ascribed to Memling. It was sold in 1870 for 7,100 francs.

HOLKER HALL. Lancashire. St. Christopher, assigned by Waagen (*Handbook*, p. 100) to Memling, but catalogued under the name of Dürer.

Amongst lost and missing works we note the following:

STRASBURG MUSEUM. The Marriage of St. Catherine, half the size of life and very like the same subject in the Hospital at Bruges. This picture perished during the siege of Strasburg in 1870. It was catalogued amongst the works of Lucas of Leyden.

BRUSSELS. At a sale in 1785 the following pictures ascribed to Memling were sold. A holy family by Memling (3 f. 7 h. by ... ? f. 2), and a Madonna surrounded by saints with painted wings (3 f. 8 h. by 6 f. 7). See *Journal des Beaux Arts* 1860. p. 162.

SCHEUT (near Brussels). Mr. A. Pinchart (in *Archives des Arts*, u. s. I. p. 288) notes the existence in 1607 of a Holy Family in the church of the Carthusians of Scheut, who had settled at Brussels after the destruction of their monastery in 1580.



## CHAPTER XII.

### GHEERARDT DAVID AND OTHER IMITATORS OF VAN EYCK AND MEMLING.

It is a coincidence worthy of being studied that whilst we look in vain for traces of Geerrit van S. Jans, at Haarlem, an artist of similar name is to be found in the guild of Bruges. Geerrit of S. Jans, the pupil of Albert van Ouwater, is surprisingly like "Gheerardt Jans fs [filius] Davidt" of Oudewater<sup>1</sup> who came in 1483, to Bruges and paid the dues of his guild as a stranger, on the 14th of January 1484.<sup>2</sup> But whereas nothing is known of the works of Geerrit of Haarlem, we have a perfect acquaintance with those of Gheerardt of Bruges, whose pictures indeed were classified and arranged long before the name of David was rescued from oblivion.<sup>3</sup>

Gheerardt David was not unknown to Sanderus, who calls him Gerardus Davidis Veteraquensis, master of Adrian Isebrand of Bruges.<sup>4</sup> Nor was he quite a stranger to Van Mander, who had heard of him in a

<sup>1</sup> See the entry of this name in the register of admissions to the guild of Bruges, and the register of the master's death in Weale's *Beffroi*, II. p. 288, and I. 225. Oudewater is a town on the Issel between Utrecht and Rotterdam.

<sup>2</sup> *Beffroi*, u. s. II. 288.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Weale discovered David which alone would be an important service to the history of Flemish Art. (See *Beffroi*, u. s. I. 224). The pictures were already classified in the first edition of this work fifteen years ago.

<sup>4</sup> Sanderus. *Flandria Illust.*, u. s., II. 154.

vague and spectral way, yet of whom he could only tell that his works were highly prized by Pieter Pœrbus.<sup>1</sup> His style is exactly that which Van Mander ascribes to Geerrit of St. Jan, his pictures being clean, sharp, finished, and regular in arrangement and expression.<sup>2</sup> It would be difficult to find a painter of the Flemish school whose panels are more remarkable for gloss and polish, or one who spends more time in blending colours to a grainless and spotless surface. What characterizes his compositions is symmetrical distribution, realism, and burnished flesh tint; forms of a staid unimpassioned type, of curt proportion and imperfect contour. In the sheen of vestments, or in gaudy juxtapositions which jar upon the eye, we miss the delicate fibre of the true colourist; and still there is brilliance and lustre to attract and please us. Landscape of variegated tints is often in singular contrast with marble pallor of flesh; but we may perhaps assign the recurrence of this phenomenon to the abrasion of the coloured glazing, which gives a sombre glow to some panels. Of great prominence in Gheerardt is the feature which Van Mander prizes in Albert Van Ouwater and Geerrit of St. Jans, the skill with which landscape is treated and tinted.

Who taught Gheerardt David is still a question; but it is easy to trace in his works an imitation of Van Eyck and Memling. At the time when Gheerardt took the freedom of his guild at Bruges, Memling was probably the best artist in the Netherlands; and there was much to learn from his soft and delicate manner; but there were pictures by John Van Eyck to be

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s., 205.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. 206.

studied in churches and private houses; and they too, no doubt had attractions for a stranger bred at a distance from Bruges.

In a very short time David rose to honours in his trade; he was fourth "*vinder*" of the guild in 1488, first *vinder* in 1495 and 98.<sup>1</sup> He came a bachelor. In 1496 he married Cornelia Cnoop, the daughter of a goldsmith.<sup>2</sup> It was Gheerhardt's fortune, in 1488, to witness the striking scenes connected with the rising against Maximilian of Austria; he might have seen the sentence of death executed on the magistrates accused of treason after the submission of Bruges. It was from the followers of these magistrates that he received a commission for a Last Judgment completed in 1498, and we may still read the valuation of this picture made by arbitrators appointed by the town and corporation.<sup>2</sup>

Amongst the persons named in the accounts of the city of Bruges, as having been concerned in valuing and paying for this picture, we notice Jacques Spronc a high official in the painter's guild, Joes de Smet, an artist, Jan de Corte, and Jan des Trompes, the latter at that time bailey of Ostend and treasurer of Bruges, and a man of mark in the municipality.<sup>3</sup> It is not improbable that des Trompes was struck with the talents which Gheerardt displayed, and ordered of him the

<sup>1</sup> Beffroi, u. s., I. 224. Vinder was the name of an official who ranked above the masters, and below the governor of the guild.

<sup>2</sup> It has been supposed that the picture here alluded to is that which now hangs in separate parts in the Academy of Bruges and represents the arrest and flaying of Sisamnes by order of Cambyzes. (See Weale in Le Beffroi, u. s. I. 259-61 and 276-86). But this is not proved, and we require to see these pictures anew before resolving whether they are by Gheerardt or not.

<sup>3</sup> Le Beffroi, u. s. I. 259-61 and 276-86.

large altar-piece which still adorns the Gallery of Bruges, and is known as the "Baptism of Christ."<sup>1</sup> On the open face of this triptych, we see the naked Christ in a hip cloth standing up to his knees in Jordan, St. John to the left pouring water out of the hollow of his hand on the head of the Redeemer, and an angel to the right in a cope of gold brocade, carrying the robe; whilst God the Father in the sky gives the benediction. On the right wing Jean des Trompes kneels with his son Philip under the protection of St. John Evangelist; and on the left, his wife Elizabeth Van der Meersch, is attended by her four daughters, and St. Elizabeth of Hungary. In the landscape distances, John the Baptist preaches and foretells the coming of the Messiah. The closed wings of the triptych, of a later date than the inner face, exhibit a picture of the Virgin with Christ on her knee, holding a bunch of grapes, and bending towards des Trompes' second wife Madeleine Cordiers, and her daughter accompanied by St. Mary Magdalen. The records of the house of Trompes tell us that Jean des Trompes lost his first wife in 1502, and his second wife in 1510; and this, coupled with the fact that Madeleine Cordiers's daughter appears to be 5 years old, gives us 1507 as the date of the completion of the altar-piece.<sup>2</sup> The striking feature here is a splendid and highly-tinted landscape, to which the figures give relief and life. The background is so bright that the coldness of the figures, and faults of composition and design, do not at once strike the eye. It may lack atmosphere, which is owing to the cleaner; but nothing can be

<sup>1</sup> There are as yet no records to prove that Geerhardt is the painter, but the treatment is his.

<sup>2</sup> Beffroi, u. s. 259-61. 276-86.

more perfect than the execution in every other particular. The portions more immediately in the foreground are complete in every respect. The trees are highly and vigorously coloured, and finished with perfect minuteness, without detriment to the effect of the general mass. They preserve, individually and severally, the character of their foliage and form, and the water reflects surrounding objects with perfect harmony and perspective truth. In contrast with this, the group of Christ baptized is not only inharmonious in colour, and feeble in composition, but tasteless and faulty in design; it is out of keeping with surrounding objects, and surcharges the foreground plane. The more distant personages being small, are less obtrusive; the figures, taken separately, are stout, short, and inelegant. In no picture of Memling, to whom this piece was long assigned, is there such impast investments, or such a mode of colouring as here—yellowish flesh tints cutting sharply on grey half shade, and the latter sharp by the side of dark shadows; the sudden contrasts of brilliant colours in dresses are similar to those adopted by the school of Leyden.

If we turn from the central picture to the wings where the Madonna and Infant Christ are represented, we find the stiff and affected bend of head peculiar to Van der Weyden; whilst the Child, instead of being naked, as in all the panels of Memling, is clothed like those of Van der Goes. The picture of the Baptism shows the germ of that small school of landscape which afterwards arose at Dinant,—the head of which, indubitably, is the painter of this work, and his pupils such men as Patenier and De Bles.

Shortly after the death of Jean des Trompes the altar-piece of the Baptism was transferred by a deed



of gift to the church of Saint Basile at Bruges, where it remained till it was taken to Paris in 1794; on being restored to the municipality of Bruges, it found a place in the town collection where it now remains.<sup>1</sup>

Saint Basile still contains a panel by Geerhardt David, an arched triptych representing Christ taken down from the cross, reminiscent of Van der Weyden's composition of the same subject.<sup>2</sup>

That Gheerardt was elected dean of his guild in 1501—2, is a proof that he then stood at the head of his profession in Bruges; his affiliation to the brotherhood "de l'Arbre Sec" in the Minorites of Bruges is registered in 1508. In 1509, he presented to the Carmelites of Sion at Bruges the well known altarpiece of the Virgin and Child with saints and angels which now forms part of the municipal collection at Rouen. There is much symmetry in the distribution of this pretty picture. The Virgin sitting in state on a chair shrouded in drapery, wears the regal crown, and holds on her lap the infant who carries a bunch of grapes; at her back stand two beautiful angels playing the viol and mandoline, the music of which is devoutly listened to by St. Fausta and St. Apollonia whose heads appear on a level with the Virgin's shoulders. To the right a pleasant company of saints is seated,—St. Agnes with her lamb turning to St. Catherine, who reads

<sup>1</sup> Bruges Academy. Nos. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31; the centre, m. 1.32 h. by 0.98; the wings m. 1.32 h. by 0.43. All the panels are injured by flaying and repaints. See the Beffroi, I. 966-86, and II. 294.

<sup>2</sup> Bruges, Saint Basile. Chapelle du Saint Sang, arched; centre, m. 1.04 h. by 0.70. Not seen by the authors. In a receipt for payments made to restore this piece in July 30 1675, it is described as by "Maitre Gerard de Bruges." A copy of the central panel is in the convent des Maricoles at Bruges. See Beffroi, u. s. I. 231.

from a missal, St. Dorothy with a casket full of roses, and a fourth saint without emblems; to the left a similar band comprising St. Godelive reading, St. Barbara pondering over the contents of a missal, St. Cecilia and St. Lucy; in the background to the right, Gheerardt himself, facing his wife who stands on the left. With all the regularity of arrangement peculiar to Memling, this altar-piece is characteristically like the Baptism in treatment. The figures are placed side by side with little attention to aërial perspective, and with but slight variety in the shape and expression of the heads. The danger of falling into extremes, usually incurred by imitators, is illustrated here by curious incongruities of proportion and of tone. The Virgin's frame is long and slender, her face of an agreeable oval, other figures of short stature have round and overweighted heads; some flesh tints are cold, others warm; there is not much study or natural truth apparent in the drawing of extremities; the outlines are dry and hard, the drapery broken and crude; sharply contrasted vestment tints and stiff impast of thick surface remind us of the Baptism of Bruges.<sup>1</sup>

By the same hand, and of polished coldness in finish, are two panels in the collection of the Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, representing the Virgin and the Angel Annuntiate;<sup>2</sup> by the same again a beautiful little landscape picture belonging to Count

<sup>1</sup> Rouen Museum. No. 301. Wood, m. 0.1.20 h. by 2.13. See the records which prove the date of 1509 and the authorship of David in the Beffroi, u. s. I. 234. 289-93, and II. 289. See further in the same place an account of the sale of the picture by the Carmelites for 57 florins to one Berthels in 1785.

<sup>2</sup> Collection of Prince Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. Wood, each piece, m. 0.78 h. by 0.65. Exhibited at the International picture show of 1869 in Munich as Van Eycks under Nos. 16 and 17.

Arco Valley at Munich, representing the Virgin in a meadow holding the Infant on her lap, who sits betrothed to St. Catherine, in presence of numerous female saints.<sup>1</sup> In the burnish of surface, as in the delicacy of outline, which marks the thin and slender hands of the pair in the Annunciation, we trace the pencil of Gheerardt as surely as we trace it in the cold deep greens of the Dutch landscape in the Marriage of St. Catherine.

Much in the feeling of David and his school is the clear, gay tinted, and polished picture at the Berlin Museum, representing Christ crucified and bewailed by the Marys, the Magdalen, and John Evangelist. In the ashen tinge of a sky upon which small fleecy clouds are rolling, in the pearl blue of distant hills, and a grey middle distance merging into cold green towards the foreground, we are strongly impressed with the individuality of Gheerardt. The cold and porcelain enamel of changing hues in flesh, the juxtaposition of madder purples with yellows and green or pink and violet in dresses, are as characteristic as the curt stature of the personages, and their overweight and breadth of head; there is more air, more harmony, and more softness of handling than in the Baptism of Bruges; but the figure of Christ is a facsimile of that in the altar-piece of Jean des Trompes, and remarkable for its exaggerated leanness and mild expression of face.<sup>2</sup>

In natural connexion with these pieces, numerous others in various galleries deserve to be mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> Munich, Count Arco Valley. No. 21 of Munich International Exhibition. Wood, m. 0.78 h. by 0.59.

<sup>2</sup> Berlin Museum. No. 573. Wood, arched, 4 f. 7 h. by 3 f. 3; from the Solly collection.

A nativity in the Santa Trinita Museum at Madrid, is a panel to which a theatrical appearance is given by two figures of all but life size, holding back a hanging through which the principal scene is viewed. In the centre, the Infant Saviour is stretched upon straw, with a flower in his hand; he lies in all the nakedness of nature adored by the kneeling Virgin, numerous angels, and two shepherds. Outside the door of the hut a crowd of people advances; to the right in front of the ox and the ass is St. Joseph.—There is little elevation or feeling in the male heads; the two large figures holding back the hanging are coarse, and the lean shape of the Infant is curiously lifeless. Peculiarly reminiscent of David are the distant figures in a landscape almost copied from that of the Baptism, and a thick impast of colours generally; but we miss the gaudy juxtapositions of tints peculiar to the Bruges altar-piece, and notice in their stead a certain flatness produced by pallor of shadow and excess of neutral reds and greys.<sup>1</sup>

An Epiphany in the Pinakothek at Munich naturally falls into the same class. It is richly furnished with figures, representing the Virgin in front of the pent house—a ruin embowered in trees and grasses, at one of the windows of which a red faced man looks in grinning. St. Joseph stands on the right, with one of the offerings in his hand; to the left kneel the kings, and their suite of black and white slaves. We are again struck by softness of outline and shortness of proportion in the figures, by gaudiness in dresses and thick impast of colour; the flesh tints vary be-

<sup>1</sup> Madrid. Santa Trinita Museum. Classed as by Lucas of Leyden, and much damaged by cleaning.

tween pallid white and ruddy red, according to age and sex; the relative positions of the Virgin and Christ are the same as in the Madrid nativity; the landscape of houses and gables, the cattle, and sheaves, are similar; and we trace beneath the reddish prevailing tone a general grey preparation.<sup>1</sup> Of this picture, which was once assigned to Van Eyck, and is now catalogued under the name of Gerard Horenbaut there is a copy in the Gallery of Berlin.<sup>2</sup> A semi replica assigned to Van Eyck is in the Brussels Museum where the Virgin, in a corner of the picture, receives the offering of one of the Magi, whilst a second embraces the Saviour's hand. St. Joseph, behind the Virgin, sits in front of an arch, near which the oxen, ass, and sheaves, are placed; the suite of the Magi occupies the right hand of the picture, and is composed of horsemen as well as of men on foot; the usual distant episodes crowd the landscape, which is a counterpart of that in the "Crucifixion" at Berlin; the Virgin and the kneeling king are the same as in the Munich picture. We thus discover in the Brussels' work component parts of divers panels scattered through the galleries of Prussia and Bavaria; yet its execution is, in most respects, superior to that of all the others. The figures though straight and stiff are natural; the colour, grey in parts and red in others, challenges comparison with that of Memling and Van Eyck; the draperies are not too much broken, and the colours are of stiff and substantial impact.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Munich Pinakothek. Saal No. 45, purchased in 1816 from Count Rechberg. Wood, 3 f. 10 h. by 5 f. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ .

<sup>2</sup> Berlin Mus. No. 546. Wood, 3 f. h. by 3, from the Solly collection.

<sup>3</sup> Brussels Museum. No. 634. Wood, m. 0.84 h. by 0.68.



Leaving continental for English collections we shall notice in this class the tree of Jesse which passed from the Culling Eardley collection at Erith into the hands of Mr. J. D. Gardner in London,<sup>1</sup> in which the genealogy of Christ is treated much in the style of all genealogies, by the symbolic representation of a tree in an arabesque style, the boughs of which are ingeniously interlaced and balanced, and made to expand into coloured roses, out of which numerous semi-figures of saints rise. This tree grows in the centre of the picture from behind a stone chair, on which St. Anne is seated, reading a book, and resting her right hand on the figure of the Virgin reposing on a richly-coloured carpet. The Infant Saviour lies on a white cloth in her two hands; two patrons kneel in prayer on each side of the group, both dressed in black, with joined hands; the one on the right having dark hair and aquiline features, the other, fair hair and a light complexion. The latter is supported by a standing figure of a priest in front, mitred, and clothed in a dark dress, trimmed with ermine covering an embroidered vest, and white drapery;—a white wand in the right hand seeming to symbolize Aaron. The former is supported by David, also in a long mantle of a light shot green colour, playing the harp; the remainder of the dress is of many colours, and embroidered, and the legs are encased in yellow boots. It may be said of this, as of all the personages depicted, that their dresses are more than usually variegated, and that the painter was partial to the changing hues of shot textures. Amongst the saints, whose bodies issue in various attitudes from the roses, it is possible to re-

<sup>1</sup> We gather from Mr. Weale's Notes on "Gerard David" in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, Vol. XX., p. 500, that the tree of Jesse passed into the hands of Mr. Gardner.

cognise a few by their symbols; but the greater part are difficult to name, as time has obliterated the inscriptions on the gold ground by which each one was distinguished.<sup>1</sup> Some of these figures point downwards towards the Virgin, whilst others look up with eagerness or veneration at another group which crowns the upper portion of the picture, and represents the Virgin holding the Infant, affectionately receiving a book from the hands of an aged man;—the Eternal with orb in hand and the papal crown, looking on with great solemnity.

An interesting feature of this panel is the patience and care with which it is executed, recalling to mind the habits of a miniaturist accustomed to lavish his efforts on the representation of arabesques and ornaments. We might point to several miniatures in this feeling, such, for instance, as that of the “Baptism of Christ,” once in Mr. Farrer’s collection, and the numerous pages of Mr. Weld Blundell’s missal at Ince. The pictures which it most resembles are the “Baptism of Christ” at Bruges, and the “Virgin and Child” with patrons and saints, in the town-hall of Rouen. Of these, we have remarked that they were occasionally tasteless, and faulty in design—the figures being frequently short and inelegant, defective in limb and hand, and hard or feeble of outline; we noticed, too, that the draperies were crude and angular, and that the colour was laid on with much impasto. We find the same defects here. The Virgin, seated near St. Anne, has the type common to Van der Weyden—the small chin and neck, and sloping shoulders of that master; the naked Infant is

<sup>1</sup> Traces of one of these inscriptions are visible near the saint in one of the roses on the left of the chair of St. Anne.

more like one by Memling. The Saviour in the lower group is marked by a squareness of shape not unfrequent in Van Eyck's creations. The figure of the Eternal, the finest in the panel, recalls to mind that of \* God the Father by Memling, in the shrine of St. Ursula; and one of the saints in the roses, who is recognised by the chalice to be St. John the Evangelist, resembles the Saviour in the "Baptism of Bruges." In all its peculiarities, however, the picture approaches most to the "Rouen votive altar-piece;" it has the feebleness of design of which we have spoken,—visible particularly in the short stature and poverty of form of Aaron, and in the faulty attitude of the body and legs of David, in the patient elaboration of the execution, and the want of vigour in the outlines—the knotted and large development of the digital joints, and the angularity of the draperies, and the profusion of their folds, without reference to the form they cover—the profusion of vehicle employed in the colours, and their vitreous aspect.

It must be admitted, however, that the general aspect of the picture, unfavourable as it is by its distribution to any development of composition, offers a fair arrangement in the disposal of the attitudes, so as to avoid monotony, and a good balance of harmonies, chiefly in the secondary and tertiary keys,—each figure being properly detached by the flowers forming the complement of the colours in the vestments. The flesh-tints are somewhat flat and unrelieved, of a pale, cold tint, falling as in miniatures to a rosy hue in the shadows.

That Gheerardt should have had a share in some, if not in all of these pieces, we may consider the more probable as he lived for forty years in Bruges; his death

on the 13th of August 1523, and his burial in Notre Dame of Bruges, being registered in the most authentic form.<sup>1</sup>

The catalogue of pictures in which Van Eyck, Van der Weyden, and Memling are imitated by disciples of the Flemish school is not exhausted when the works of Gheerardt David and his school are considered; there are others still to be noticed in numerous collections.

Somewhat akin to the Madonna of Rouen in body of colour and in defects of drawing and composition, is a marriage of Cana, at the Louvre, which once hung in the chapel "du Saint Sang" at Saint Basile of Bruges.<sup>2</sup> At a table laid out under a colonnade, the bride sits with her mother in the midst of guests and, attended by the Virgin, Christ presides at the upper end of the board; to the right, in the foreground, is a donor with his son, to the left the donatrix; and, looking in from the outside, a Dominican monk. On the closed shutters the Virgin and Child are depicted; the gaudiness of tints in dresses here exceeds any thing of the kind in the altar-piece of the Baptism.

Some panels on which Flemish writers have founded an opinion that Memling lived till 1499, are in the

<sup>1</sup> Beffroi, I. 225. Not seen or not noticed by the authors, but assigned to Gheerardt, are the following: London, Mr. White, from the collection of Mr. Thomas Barrett of Lee Priory; wing of an altar-piece once in St. Donatian of Bruges, representing the donor Bernardino de Salviatis, canon of St. Donatian, attended by the patron Saint of the cathedral, St. Bernardino, and a bishop—all in a landscape. On the opposite wing, which is missing, there was a likeness of Christine Van Rossem the donor's mother, attended by St. Christina and two other saints (Weale in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*. Vol. XX. p. 494-6). Cologne, Oppenheim Collection.—Virgin and Child in a landscape. Wood, m. 1.02 h. by 0.84, from the collection of Mr. du Sybel at Brussels (Beffroi, u. s., I. 288-9).—Madrid Museum. No. 1491. Virgin and Child (Waagen in *Jahrbücher für Kunst und Wissenschaft*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Leipzig, 1868. Heft I. p. 49).

<sup>2</sup> Louvre. No. 596. Wood, m. 0.96 h. by 1.28. (Compare Weale in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, u. s. XX. 499).

Antwerp Gallery, signed "C. H.," and dated 1499.<sup>1</sup> These panels form a diptych, and represent the Virgin standing in a Gothic edifice, and holding the Infant Christ; behind her are two angels with a book; kneeling on the wing is an abbot in prayer. On the obverse is the Saviour standing on a globe, and near him a kneeling Benedictine. The stiff, exaggerated posture of the Saviour, the chough of hair upon his forehead, the hard manner in which the garments are depicted, the dull unmeaning colour, which neither equals the softness and the clearness of Memling, nor the firmness and severity of Van Eyck; all these suffice to show that the diptych is the work of a painter unlike Memling in style and handling and afflicted with the painful defects of a mechanical and monotonous execution.

A picture in this country, which deserves the same remarks as these, is the pretended Memling formerly in Mr. Rogers' Collection, representing the Virgin and Child—a highly-finished and minute work, apparently from the same hand as this Antwerp diptych, but delicately painted, with much body of well-blended light colour.<sup>2</sup>

Two other panels, the "St. Catherine" of the Belvedere Gallery, attributed to Hubert Van Eyck, and the "Virgin and Child," assigned to John Van Eyck, noticed in the works of those artists, strike us as exhibiting characteristics similar to those which mark the Madonnas of the Antwerp Gallery and the Rogers' Collection.

<sup>1</sup> Antwerp Museum. Nos. 517 and 518; four panels, each 0.31 m. high by 0.15 m. broad. Wood. Taken from the Abbey of the Dunes lez Bruges; having been sold by the last abbot, Mr. Nicolas de Roovere, to Mr. Van Ertborn.

<sup>2</sup> Wood, about 6 in. by 4. Ascribed by Passavant (*Kunstreise*, Frankfurt, 1833. p. 9) to Memling, by others to Van Eyck.



In the same Gallery, but different in manner, are two small heads on one panel, of a male and female—certainly powerful in colour and of much nature, firm in design, and profuse in vehicle, but exhibiting the peculiar features of a more modern craftsman than Van Eyck or Memling,<sup>1</sup> and rather in the manner of the former than in that of the latter.

There was sold at Christie's in 1854, at the sale of pictures belonging to J. D. Gardner, a triptych originally taken from a Spanish monastery, representing the nativity, with the Visitation and Epiphany at the sides. On the back of these panels were the expulsion of Adam and Eve, and beneath them, figures of St. John and St. Catherine. This triptych under Memling's name is by the same hand as a Nativity in the Museum of Dijon, in which the habits of an artist of Memling's time may be traced. The colour of the flesh-tints at Dijon is grey and dark in shadow and ruddy red in light; there is lack of *chiaro-scuro*; the attitude and features of the figures are unnatural, the type of the Infant's face is repulsive, and the forms are defective.<sup>2</sup>

In the Labouchere collection at Stoke Park a picture ascribed to Van Eyck represents a vision appearing to a man on the right hand foreground, who kneels asleep with his head on a desk. This personage is dressed in full pontificals, and reposes under the protection of a guardian saint, who carries a crozier and mitre. The types, character, attitude, and drapery of the figures in this panel are proper to the school of Van der Weyden, and not to that of Van Eyck; the colour, so far from rivalling or approaching that of the chief of the Fle-

<sup>1</sup> Wood, 7¼ in. high by 5½ in. broad.

<sup>2</sup> No. 239, Dijon Cat. 0 m. 87 c. by 0 m. 70 c., French meas. Wood.

mish school, is like that of the early artists of Belgium, from which Van der Weyden did not entirely emancipate himself; the treatment is very unequal, and similar to that in numerous works by scholars and imitators of Van der Weyden, whose pictures are classified in various galleries under the names of Van Eyck and Memling, and are really executed by men of a very second-rate talent.

A portable altar-piece from the Gallery of the King of Holland, supposed to have belonged to Charles the Fifth, is a mixed copy of Van der Weyden and Memling by one of their followers—the centre comprising the “Adoration of the Magi;” the right wing, female saints; the left, male saints, all praying. The closed triptych is adorned with monochromes of St. Anthony and St. Christopher.<sup>1</sup>

A series of pictures in the Palace of the Prince at Madrid<sup>2</sup> may be noticed here. It consists of fifteen small panels embodying scenes from the Passion of our Saviour; one of them an exact copy of a supplementary episode in Memling’s picture of “St. John the Baptist” in the Louvre, representing the Baptism of Christ, and resembling a composition of the same subject on the outer wing of Memling’s “Sposalizio” in the Hospital at Bruges. Another of these panels contains figures like those upon the shrine of Memling; such, for instance, as the soldiers, clad in polished armour, reflecting surrounding objects. These pictures, small as they are in size, and minute in finish, imitate, in many points of costume and detail, the works of Memling; but the colour is not his; it is thickly and evenly laid on, high in tone, and hard to the touch. The character of

<sup>1</sup> Purchased for 6,450 fl. Wood, 68 in. high by 43 broad.

<sup>2</sup> See Quevedo, *Hist. del Escorial*, p. 354. Ascribed to A. Dürer.

certain heads exhibits the study of John Van Eyck, whose firmness of hand is almost attained by this successful artist. But this appears in parts only, whilst in others both colour and design are weak and flaccid. Streamers float amongst the figures, emblazoned with the lion and the tower, which are the royal cognisance of Castile. Inscriptions are also visible here and there, but so defaced as to be illegible. The border of the garment of the Magdalen, in one of the fifteen panels, is covered with the letter H., and that of the Magdalen, in another panel, is likewise covered with the letter M. But though these letters are the initials of Memling's name, the handling of the pictures is not his; they seem, indeed, to belong more properly to a painter of the sixteenth century, who studied not merely Memling, but Van Eyck.

The names of Juan Flamenco and Jan de Flandes suggest themselves at once in connexion with these panels; but as nothing certain is known respecting them, the matter remains in doubt. Still, we may hazard a conjecture here; and it may not be unlikely that these are the productions of Jan de Flandes, who finished eleven pictures, in 1509, for the cathedral of Palencia. As regards other imitators of Memling and Van Eyck, some men of that time, like Mabuse, diverged into such different styles—being at one time Flemish and minute, at the next, Italian, and merely imitative—that we scarcely believe the evidence which proves that the artist is the same in both; but when Mabuse painted in the first of these manners, he followed the method of Memling's imitators, which we think far preferable to that in which he imitated Michael Angelo.

Another painter, superior to Mabuse—Kalkar—is an instance of similar imitation. His pictures in the

Church of Kalkar, his native town, show how skilfully he sought the early Flemish manner; but when he was in Italy, he imitated Titian and Giorgione with such effect, that, Vasari tells us, his pictures passed for the originals of those masters. In truth, the Flemings possessed, more than any others, the art of imitation; and we see them, after Memling, acting on an uniform principle, and merely varying in slight particulars of finish and detail. Who these imitators were it is now impossible to say.

In the Breviary of Cardinal Grimani, now at Venice, several hundred miniatures are preserved, which the Anonimo ascribes to Memling, Lievin of Antwerp, and Gerard of Ghent.<sup>1</sup> The miniatures in this manuscript,

<sup>1</sup> The person here meant is, doubtless, Gerard Horenbaut whose birth has been hitherto placed too late in the fifteenth century; namely, in 1498, (vide "*Messenger des Sciences et des Arts de Belgique*," Vol. I. Ghent, 1833, p. 16). Albert Dürer's Reliquien (Campe) correct this error; that painter stating in his diary that Gerard, who lived at Antwerp in 1521, had then a daughter named Susanna, aged eighteen, whose precocious talent he admired. Gerard Horenbaut must have been in his manhood in 1498. This is an additional fact in support of believing that Horenbaut, and not Van der Meire, painted miniatures in the Breviary of St. Mark. It may not be amiss, also, to correct an error, somewhat common at the present time, respecting the name of the person who presented this Breviary to Cardinal Grimani. The "*Anonimo ed. by Morelli*" states (p. 77), that the Breviary was sold to Cardinal Grimani for 500 ducats, by Messer Antonio Siciliano. It has been inferred from this, that the person alluded to by the Anonimo was Antonello da Messina, —the painter whose life and works are treated of in the present volume. Morelli, in one of his notes to the Anonimo (note 100, p. 189), speaking of Antonello da Messina with reference to the portraits of Alvise Pasqualino, and Michel Vianello, says, that the presence of Antonello da Messina in Venice, in 1475, is proved by a letter written from Matteo Colaccio Siciliano to Antonio Siciliano, "Rector of the artists" in Padua, and published in his work, "*De Fine Oratoris*," in 1486. In this letter, Colaccio mentions Antonello da Messina as follows:—"Habet vero hæc ætas Antonellum Siculum, cujus pictura Venetiis in Divi Cassiani ædê magnæ est admirationi." Antonio Siciliano, to whom

which approach nearest to Memling, in the style peculiar to his followers, are numerous; but the most remarkable one, representing the "Offerings of the Magi," is a reduced fac-simile of the Munich "Adoration."

Another Adoration of the Kings, formerly in possession of Mr. Aders, and later still in the collection of Mr. Green at Hadley<sup>1</sup> is inscribed with the initials A. W., yet assigned to Lievin de Witte. Who ever the painter may have been, he shows himself a careful and minute executant, an imitator of Memling, partial to the light rosy tints of miniatures, and from the character of his painting, a contemporary of Lievin de Witte and Horenbaut. This Adoration is more finished, more pleasing in colour and types than the root of Jesse of the late Culling Eardley collection; the composition is not an exact reproduction of that of Munich, above mentioned, but is reminiscent of it as it is of the miniature at Venice.

At Xanten on the Rhine there is a picture in the Flemish style, representing the temptation of St. Anthony, marked on the bonnet of one of the figures with the initials "A. W.;" but the treatment, though Flemish, is not that of the Munich "Adoration." Thus the question as to who these imitators of Memling are, remains involved in darkness. It is true that Lievin de Witte or d'Anversa—for, doubtless, they are one person—must have painted at this time. Van Mander describes him

this letter is adressed, was one of the family of the Adinolfi, and a native of Catania; and is, therefore, a different person from Antonello da Messina. It is curious to note that the Anonimo (p. 81) speaks of the portrait of Antonio Siciliano painted by a Flemish artist.

<sup>1</sup> Manchester Exhibition. No. 482.



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as a man of talent in painting, but especially of cleverness in architecture. There is great architectural proficiency in these imitators, and Lievin may be the author of some of the panels which we have mentioned; but the question, it need scarce be repeated, is too obscure to be solved at present.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### DIERICK BOUTS.

It is probably by accident that the name of Dierick Bouts or Stuerboudt was brought into connection with a school of early art at Haarlem. On a visit to that city Van Mander was shown the painter's dwelling with its old fashioned front and carved adornments; and as he journeyed further through the Netherlands, he saw his picture of Christ between St. Peter and St. Paul in the collection of a private gentleman at Leyden.<sup>1</sup> The truth appears to be that Dierick's parents lived at Haarlem, but that the school in which he was educated had its seat in Flanders. On the framing of the panel which Van Mander saw at Leyden, the gilder fashioned this inscription, "Dirck a native of Haarlem produced this work in 1462, at Louvain;" and modern annalists subsequently traced all Dierick's productions to that place.<sup>2</sup>

As far back in the 15th century as A. D. 1439, there was settled at Louvain a guildsman called Hubert, noted in numerous items of account as "de schildere" (the painter) but known to his friends as Hubert Stuerboudt. He was at the head of a numerous family of artists of which his sons Hubert the younger, Gielys, and Frissen, were the most conspicuous mem-

<sup>1</sup> Van Mander, u. s., 207.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. ib.

bers; but the practice which he enjoyed was modest and unassuming, and usually confined to the humblest functions.<sup>1</sup> That he coloured four bas-reliefs in 1439, for the choir of St. Pierre at Louvain, is not more important than that he carved a picture frame for Dierick Bouts in 1481.<sup>2</sup> In 1449—52, he furnished drawings for bas-reliefs in the new townhall.<sup>3</sup> In 1452, he was master of decorative art in the service of the authorities; and as such alternately worked at the “refectien” (entremets) for the procession of Our Lady, or images of the Virgin, tabernacles and dogvanes.<sup>4</sup> At one period he was honoured with the more important commission of a “Last Judgment” for the portal of a cemetery—but this was an exceptional and rare event. In the quaint text of the municipal accounts we learn to judge at once of the quality of work to which he was put, and the price at which it was valued. “The paradise” for the procession of Our Lady (1462) was charged eight stivers;<sup>5</sup> the tinting “of Our Lady, and the tabernacle of St. Peter at the Porte de Tirlemont” (1462) five gulden;<sup>6</sup> the tabernacle at the gate St. Esprit (1464) thirty six “pleken”;<sup>7</sup> the “Last Judgment” above the entrance to the cemetery of St. Pierre (1467) two and a half gulden.<sup>8</sup> Hubert was perhaps a relative; he certainly was a friend of Dierick Bouts, for whom he received the

<sup>1</sup> Of Hubert the younger, Gielys, and Frissen, there are notices from 1462 to 1481. Compare Louvain Monumental, u. s., 185, and Schayes (A. G. B.) Documents inédits in Tom. XIII. No. 11 of the Bulletins de l'Acad. Royale de Belgique.

<sup>2</sup> Louv. Mon. 135. 185.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. ib. 136.      <sup>4</sup> Ib. ib. ib.

<sup>5</sup> Schayes. Doc. Ined. p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Louvain Mon. 60.

<sup>7</sup> Ib. ib. 35. The plecke was the 90th part of a gulden.

<sup>8</sup> Ib. ib. 108.

payment of his salary in 1468.<sup>1</sup> We know nothing as to the relationship of the two men; but it is clear that Dierick was looked up to as a master in Louvain, and when we take a retrospective glance at the series of pictures which he left behind him, we can tell under whose tuition he rose to local fame. At some period, which is still uncertain, Roger Van der Weyden was made a citizen and painted pictures at Louvain. The sight of these pictures might induce Dierick to study in Van der Weyden's school; he may have been Roger's "help" and journeyman at Louvain itself. When this occurred is immaterial; Dierick, we saw, was in active practice two years before Van der Weyden's death.

According to the unsupported evidence of Molanus, an annalist of the 17th century, Dierick is the son of Theodoric Bouts, a landscape painter who died aged 75 in 1400. There were portraits of Theodoric, and his two sons, Dierick and Albert, in a panel at the Minorites (récollets), and pictures by Albert Bouts, in the convent of the Augustines, at Louvain;<sup>2</sup> but of these no trace has been preserved, and there is grave cause for doubting the correctness of the dates of Molanus, when we consider that Dierick's productions betray the education of the schools of Bruges and Brussels, and date after 1460. No means at present exist to solve these doubts; the life size figure of the Redeemer between St. Peter and St. Paul, which Van

<sup>1</sup> E. Van Even. *Thierry Bouts*. 8°. Brux. 1861. pp. 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> Molanus, *Hist. Lov. MSS.* 10, in Van Even's *Thierry Bouts*, u. s., p. 3, and *Louv. Mon.* p. 139. The pictures here mentioned are missing. Mr. Wauters, in a record of 1467, at Brussels, found the name of "Thierry de Harlem" registered as a witness, aged 76, and supposes this Thierry to be Dierick Bouts, but the identity is not proved; nor is it probable. Wauters, *Revue Universelle des Arts*, u. s., 1856, p. 252.

Mander studied, is missing, and no earlier picture of proved genuineness is known except the Last Supper in Saint Pierre of Louvain, the payments for which were made in 1466—8.

Looking at the complex of Dierick's works, it is not an improbable conjecture that he painted a small bust likeness which, early in the present century, attracted attention in the collections of Mr. Aders and Samuel Rogers. In the high cap and wig, and close vest encasing the form, in the meek expression of a face not without sickly regularity, or the stiff action of hands resting awkwardly on each other, many persons supposed that we ought to recognize the self-made portrait of the convalescent Memling when still feeble from his wounds, and musing over the kind treatment of the nuns of St. John of Bruges. The date of 1462, carved on the stone wall forming the background of the picture, was only considered fatal to the theory that Memling's wounds were received at Nancy; but it is telling as against the authorship of Memling that the treatment is unlike that of his genuine pieces, whilst it is like that of Bouts; and we shall be struck at the very outset by Dierick's copiousness of glassy impast, uniform ruddiness of flesh tint, and curious want of feeling for relief by shadow.<sup>1</sup>

Judging further of Dierick's power from the Last Supper at Louvain, we might assign to him the copies of Van der Weyden's Deposition from the Cross in the Escorial, and the Virgin sitting to St. Luke in the Santa Trinidad Museum at Madrid. That Dierick was not unacquainted with Bruges, and not quite a stranger

<sup>1</sup> Ex Aders' and Rogers' collections. Wood, under life size, dated "1462". Through an opening to the l. there is a view of a landscape. See Passavant, *Kunstreise*, p. 94.



to men of influence at the Burgundian court, might be gathered from a document published by Count De Laborde, in which (A. D. 1462) one Thierry de Harlem is described as claiming and receiving from Pierre Bladelin a scapular saved from the wreck of the property found in the house of Jehan Coustain after his execution;<sup>1</sup>—but we are unable to determine whether Dierick Bouts is identical with Thierry de Harlem or not, and if he were it might still be probable that Van der Weyden was Dierick's teacher, more especially as there is evidence in Dierick's works that he was acquainted with the style of Roger's cleverest pupil. The earliest records as yet discovered prove that Dierick lived as a married man at Louvain in 1450.<sup>2</sup> Long after his name had been forgotten it was habitual to assign his Last Supper in St. Pierre of Louvain to Memling, and until records were found establishing the authorship few people believed that it was not the work of a much more gifted craftsman. Yet to those who had devoted some leisure to the study of Flemish painting there were many features in the Last Supper which pointed to one partaking of the styles of Van Eyck, Memling, and Van der Weyden. It is also characteristic of the want of acumen which till quite lately marked pictorial criticism that the wings of this triptych were exhibited in the Galleries of Berlin and Munich under the name of Memling.

<sup>1</sup> "Je Thierry de Harlem confesse avoir receu de Pierre Bladelin conseiller de MS. le Duc de Bourgogne une patenostre, lesquelles patenostre ont par eulz esté trouvé entre les biens déclairiez par feu Jehan Costain, et sont icelles patenostres à moy appartenant despiéça le IX<sup>e</sup> jour d'Octobre l'an milccc soixante deux." *De Laborde, Les Ducs de B., u. s., Vol. II.* p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> Wauters in A. Pinchart's Annot., u. s., p. CCXXXI.

One of the features of Dierick's practice is that he suggests distinctions in his impersonations by varieties of texture in skin and complexion. The coarse grain in the face of the apostles seated round the table of the Last Supper is distinguished from the finer one of that of Christ by accidents of surface and by swarth, but the contrasts created by this means are brought out with unnatural strength, and the smooth coldness of the one is as much overdone as the wrinkled detail of the other. What there is of relief by shadow, is often grey and crude; swarth is too uniform in redness, and there is something metallic in the gloss and projection of colours tempered in viscous vehicles. Much of melancholy stillness pervades the eyes which show the greater portion of the pupils; and flexibility seems denied to heads of bony form and overweighted size. We miss the true ideal of selection in long necked and shoulderless specimens of mortality—and yet with all these failings Dierick's picture is striking for earnestness of feeling and conscientious solemnity of treatment, and a certain freshness in landscapes which has its charm. If we look closely at the masks we observe an impress of Memling in the face of Christ, whilst the two servants in rear of the table remind us of the models of John Van Eyck; both faces being clearly portraits, one indeed supposed to represent the painter himself.<sup>1</sup> Of the four panels once forming the

<sup>1</sup> Louvain St. Pierre. Chapel of the Trinity. Last Supper. Wood, 2 f. 9 h. by 4 f. 5, originally on the altar of the Saint Sacrement. The Saviour is between four apostles. Three apostles are at each end, and two on stools at the front side of the table. The hall has two windows and a ceiling of beams, from one of which a chandelier depends. Through a door to the left a landscape and colonnade are seen. The payments for this picture in 1466-8 are in Van Even's Thierry Bouts, u. s., pp. 37-8. It was

wings of this triptych Elijah in the Desert wakened by the Angel, and the Feast of the Passover, in the Berlin Museum, are less delicate in finish than the Last Supper; and there is something unpleasant in the cold grey transitions of flesh, and the careless modelling of pasty fluid tones, but the landscapes contribute greatly to diminish the first unfavourable impressions thus created, and there is much agreeable brilliance in the full juicy tones. The meeting of Abraham and Melchisedek and the gathering of the Manna in the Pinakothek at Munich are suggestive of similar remark; all the panels show that the master was at fault when delineating instant action; and it is clear from the strain and angular stiffness of his personages that Dierick was not as skilful in the selection of proportions or in the outline of extremities and articulations as he ought to have been. We note also a wide divergence from the habits of Van der Weyden, in the tasteless splendour and overladen ornaments of dress.<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to imagine a greater contrast than that which distinguishes the court painter of this time from the painter in the service of municipalities. Van Eyck and his successors are privileged as members of the Ducal household; they draw their salaries and receive bounties for extraordinary services; they have their servants and livery horses. Dierick Bouts and his like live in a much humbler sphere. They receive their small but well earned payments for performance

restored in 1840 by Mr. L. Mortemard and C. de Cauwer, and it was then that the words: "Opus Johannis Hemling" were painted on the frame.

<sup>1</sup> Berlin Museum Nos. 533 and 539, both: Wood, 2 f. 9 h. by 2-2 1/2.—Munich Pinakothek, Nos. 44 and 55, Cabinets. Wood, same size as the panels at Berlin.—All purchased at Brussels.

of their duties, they have no fixed salary, but they go annually to the town hall and carry home their vestment money (*voedergeld*); they are clothed at the public expense, but that is their only privilege; and they have the charges of their guild at recurring intervals. The court craftsmen take some reflex from the splendour of their masters, the city painters are plain and humble servants of a municipality not without its pride of wealth but dealing economically and carefully with the pence of the tax payers. So in 1468, we find Dierick Bouts entered in the accounts of Louvain as "*portratuerdere*," or municipal painter *ex officio*, but excepting the honour and the title, his dues are but 90 plack for a coat.<sup>1</sup>

Years after Van der Weyden painted the legends of Trajan and Herkenbald for the town hall of Brussels, Dierick was commissioned to design two pictures for the council room in the townhouse of Louvain. He found the subject, or some one chose it for him, in the well known legend of the Chronicle of Godfrey of Viterbo which tells of the execution of an innocent man, and the tardy retaliation which followed it. In one of the panels King Otho is seated in the court of his castle attended by his Queen, on whose perjured evidence an earl is charged with offending her honour. The body of the decapitated earl lies on the ground, his head being held by the executioner and delivered to his countess in the presence of numerous spectators. In the second picture, the countess kneels before Otho enthroned, holding the head of her husband in one hand, and a glowing bar of iron in the other. The courtiers wonder at the triumphant issue

<sup>1</sup> Van Even. Thierry Bouts, u. s., p. 8.

of the ordeal, which leads to the death of the Queen at the stake, as shown in the distance. We may ascribe some portion of the stiffness and slenderness, which marks the majority of the figures in these two pieces to the tightness of close fitting dress peculiar to Dierick's time. The hose and jackets and jerkins of the period, are as unpicturesque, the folds of brocaded coats are as stiff and brittle, as may be; and yet Dierick makes small effort apparently to correct or conceal these natural impediments to pictorial effect. There is a man in an embroidered pelisse in the "execution," who turns his back to the spectator, and still shows three quarters of his face by a forced dislocation of the muscles of his neck. A courtier in profile in the ordeal stands before us with little more of leg than a stork; and the gesture of the king as he sits in wonder is curiously trivial and affected; an incorrect, and very high centre of vision throws legs and feet into quaint and unpleasant obliquities; there is an obvious lack of shoulders and calves in most instances; but such defects as these are counterbalanced by occasional force and nature in attitude, as in the case of the executioner, or a wondering friar; by grace and simplicity of drapery cast, as in the kneeling countess; and above all by the soft clearness of landscapes, rendering with happy fidelity the hilly ranges that form the attraction of the valley of the Mæs. How clearly Bouts was indebted to Van der Weyden and Memling for types and faces, we observe in the delicate features and graceful movement of females; but the feeling for tone which distinguishes Memling is hardly to be found in the ruddy uniformity of flesh dulled by leaden undertones and unrelieved by shadow, or in the richly ornamented but deep dyed



shades of vestments. Nor is Dierick technically up to the mark of his contemporary of Bruges, when he strives to conceal his workmanship under coloured glazes of a viscous half transparency. In this respect, indeed, there is one painter to whom he nearly approximates, and that is Cristus, with whom he has in common the habit of cold grey flesh transitions.<sup>1</sup>

The municipality showed a proper appreciation of Dierick's skill after the completion of these pictures by ordering others of equal importance. They signed a contract, in May 1468, for a triptych of the Last Judgment, which was finished for the hall of the Echevins of Louvain, in 1472. They ordered at the same time a picture of colossal dimensions for which the subjects were given (1471), by Jean Van Hæcht, an Augustinian monk and doctor of divinity, and this work the magistrates visited in state at the painter's shop; but before it could be finished, Dierick died, and his heirs were paid for what he did after the panels had been valued by Van der Goes.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These two pictures were sold in the present century to a dealer, and then passed into the collection of King William of Holland, from which they were bought at the price of 9000 florins. They were finally sold to the Brussels Museum for 30,000 francs. Wood, m. 3.23 h. by 1.82: numbered 30 and 31. The figures are of life size. The following records have reference to these pieces. "Anno 1468 wordden II stucken schildereyen gemaect by Mr. Dierick Stuerbout, die in de Raetcamere staen, d'eene daer de Keyser justitie doet doen over eenen grave von hove, voert betichten van de Keyserinne, van dat hy haer oneerbareyheit te voren gelecht hadde; ende d'andere daer de Keyser over zyne Keyserinne justitie doet, metten brande, daert voirseyde betichten, valsch bevonden wirt; die geexstimeert waeren op II<sup>c</sup>XXX(230) croonenLXXII phs (Philippen)t'stuck." Extract from an unedited MS. lately belonging to Mr. E. van Hoorebeke at Gand, and printed by Mr. de Bast in the *Messenger des Arts et des Sciences de la Belgique*. Tom. I. pp. 17-22.

<sup>2</sup> The following documents illustrate the text. "Van eender tafelen te maken van scryn houte die Meester Dierick verdinckt

Dierick Bouts was on his deathbed in 1475; and on the 17th April, feeling that his end was near, he made a will in which he divided all his property between Albert and Dierick his sons by his first wife, Catherine and Gertrude, his daughters, nuns in the convent of Dommale, and Elizabeth Van Vossem his second wife. He ordered his body to be buried in the Minorites of Louvain. The will is dated from a house in the Rue des Frères Mineurs at Louvain, and its

heeft te makene van porteratueren ende van meer andere cleine refectien, &c. 1468—9.

“Anno 1479-80(?) Item Meester Dierick Boudts, scildere, tegen der Stad verdinght hadde te schildere viere stucken van eender grooter tafelen die aen een dienen soudon op een sael oft camere te zettene van porteratueren ende noch van eenen cleinen tafelenken met zynen dueren van den ordele, ende daer d'ordel in-neghestelt es, hangende in de raet camere.

“Daeraff, de voirscreve meester Dierick soe verre hy dis volmaect hadde gehad, soude hebben van de Stad de somme van Vc. cronon; d'welc alsoe niet ghebuert en es, want by binnen mid-delen tyde gestorven es, alsoe dat de selve binnen synen tyde niet meer vol maect en heeft van den grooten tafelen den een stuck, ende tweeste byna volmaect, ende dat clein stuck van den ordele hangend in de Raetcamere, volmaect. Daer voer hem ende synen kinderen vergouwen ende betaelt heft, ter estumacien ende scattungen van eenen den notabelsten scildere die men binnen den lande hier omtrent wiste te vindene, die gheboren es van den Stad van Ghendt, ende nu wonechtig inde Rooden cloester in Zuenien, de somme van guldens vorscreve III<sup>c</sup>VI gul. XXXVI. pl. (Schayes, u. s., p. 8.) “Eenen Monik van den Roden-Cloestere ghesincckt, als boven, die de Tafel van portaturen visiteerde, boven 't Register, en in de Raet Camer d'oirdeel te Jannes in den Ingel, 1 Stoep rynt wynt, 1480.” (Van Even, Thierry Bouts, u. s., p. 26.) Item ten tyde doen meester Dierick voirscreven dit werc maecte en de stad visenteerde tot synen huysse, werd hem ghesincckt, ten bevelen van den burgmeesteren ende den heeren van den rade, in wyne, lopende xc plecken. Ende desgelycx ghesincckt meester Janne Vanhaeght, doctoer in der Godheit, die der stad de materie gaff uut ouden zeesten die men scilden soude, was hem gescincckt tot synen huysse in wyne, XCIX plecken, valet te samen in guldens vorscreven III gul. XXVII pl. (Schayes, u. s., p. 8.) Other records are in van Evens' Th. Bouts, u. s.

signature doubtless preceded Dierick's death by a few days only.<sup>1</sup>

For a century or more the pictures of Dierick's later time remained in their places at Louvain, then disappeared for ever;<sup>2</sup> but in want of them we have other works from the same hand to fall back upon, and these perhaps not the least interesting amongst the compositions originated by the master. About the time when the brotherhood of the Holy Sacrament founded the altar at Saint Pierre on which Bout's last supper was placed, they also erected another altar which they dedicated to St. Erasmus; and here a triptych was placed, which, from evidence of style and the testimony of Molanus, we accept as the work of Dierick.<sup>3</sup> There is nothing to distinguish this triptych in manner from the legendary pictures of 1468 or the Last Supper; it is only more repulsive from the hideous nature of the subject.<sup>4</sup> Equally disagreeable and quite as characteristic of the master as regards treatment is the Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus in Saint Sauveur at Bruges depicting the saint stretched upon the ground, and about to be torn to pieces by four very large

<sup>1</sup> See the will in *Journal des Beaux Arts* for 1867, pp. 111-112. An act of August 25, 1475, is mentioned in Pinchart's *Annot.*, u. s., p. CCXXXIII, as alluding to Dierick's widow.

<sup>2</sup> Two parts of Dierick's unfinished piece with subjects "of the olden time", were in their places at the town hall in 1628.—*Louv. Mon.*, u. s., 141.

<sup>3</sup> Molanus. *Hist. Lovan. MS.* in *Louv. Mon.*, u. s., 180 and v. Evens, Thierry Bouts, p. 38, where the probability that this piece was finished before 1466 is suggested.

<sup>4</sup> Louvain. St. Pierre. This picture, on wood, is in the chapel of the Virgin des Sept Douleurs, having been removed from its original place. It represents the saint in a landscape on a stretcher beneath a windlass, on which the bowels are wound by two men in the presence of a judge and spectators. On the wings are figures of St. Jerom and St. Bernard. On the framing is a modern inscription: "Opus Johannes Hemling."

horses, led by servants. This hideous scene, treated in the style of Memling, has furnished one of the arguments in favour of that painter's stay at Venice. The horses, it is said, are copies of those in the front of San Marco; but there is no resemblance to warrant such an inference; and these are neither as natural nor as well drawn as those in the Apocalypse of the Sposalizio. The painting as a whole has been much restored and touched, and the tone and colours are altered; but the composition is poor, the character of the heads and figures is defective, the dresses are in bad taste, and the attitudes are exaggerated according to Bouts' custom. The figure of the saint is thin and slender, and its muscular development faulty. The wings are in better preservation; one, containing an incident from the life of St. Hippolytus, a group of men, being like the central panel, the other, representing a kneeling man and woman in a landscape, being cold in tone, whilst it is soft in outline, and more in Memling's style than the rest of the altar-piece. The ill-restored obverse of this triptych represents in *chiaro 'scuro* St. Charles, St. Hippolytus, St. Elizabeth, and St. Margaret.<sup>1</sup>

Numerous panels in continental galleries are assignable to Dierick, and we should prominently mention amongst these the triptych in the Pinakothek of Munich, still catalogued as Memling, which was painted for the altar of the Snoij family at Malines. The centre represents the Epiphany, the wings St. John the Baptist and St. Christopher carrying the Infant Christ.

<sup>1</sup> The donors on the right wing of the picture are according to Mr. Weale, Hippolyte de Berthoz and his wife Elizabeth de Keverwyck. The altar-piece once belonged to the guild of lime-burners.—See *Bruges et ses Environs* by W. H. J. Weale. Bruges 1862. pp. 67-8.



Noteworthy here is the thick and glossy impast, the inky flesh tint, and the slender length of the figures.<sup>1</sup>

"Judas kissing the Saviour, and the Capture," is a picture in the Munich Gallery similar in style to those of Dierick, and apparently painted by him at the time when he completed the legendary pictures of Louvain, now at the Hague,<sup>2</sup> where they are attributed to Memling.

The character of "the Last Supper" at Louvain is distinguishable in the picture of the Leuchtenberg Collection, also assigned to Memling, "St. John the Baptist showing the Saviour to a repentant sinner."<sup>3</sup>

"The Resurrection," in the Moritz Kapelle at Nuremberg, seems also, from its size and execution, to have formed part of "the Capture" in the Munich Pinaothek.<sup>4</sup>

The chapel of Los Reyes at Granada contains a picture in three compartments, representing the Crucifixion, the Deposition, and the Resurrection. It is noticeable that this last, and the Resurrection at Nuremberg, are the same composition, though the figures in the panel of Granada are more exaggerated in form and darker in tone, and appear to be by an artist of Cologne. Two pictures in the sacristy of the same church are called Memling, but are of a later date.

Numbers of pictures might now be classed amongst the works of artists who made the art a trade, and

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 48, 49, 50, Cabinets. Munich Gallery. Wood; centre, 1 f. 11" h. by 1 f. 11"; wings, 1 f. 4" 6" h. by 10"; on the backs of the side panels are (No. 49) St. Catharine, (No. 50) St. Barbara.

<sup>2</sup> No. 58, Cab. Munich Catal. Wood, 3 f. 3" 3" h. by 2 f. 1" 4".

<sup>3</sup> No. 104, II. Saal. Leuchtenberg Catalogue. Wood, 1 f. 8" h. by 1 f. 3" 6" broad. This collection is now at St. Petersburg.

<sup>4</sup> No. 23, Moritz Kap. Catalogue. Wood, 3' 5" high by 2' 2" broad, Nuremberg. Assigned to Memling.



who painted in the mixed and degraded manner of the amalgamated schools of Louvain and Cologne; but the enumeration would be tedious. We need only mention a Christ taken from the cross, at Brussels, assigned to Memling,<sup>1</sup> and a similar subject at the Hague,<sup>2</sup> also given, and with no more reason, to Memling, a Head of Christ at Munich, copied, without intelligence, from that by Van Eyck at Berlin,<sup>3</sup> and another Head of the Saviour, somewhat in the manner of Massys, in the same Gallery,<sup>4</sup> as examples of our meaning. In the Madrid Museum there is a bad copy of Memling's "Adoration of the Magi"<sup>5</sup> at Bruges which is called an original.

The Inventory of Margaret of Austria contains a picture by Dierick Stuerbout, of which the traces are lost.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Passavant assigns to Dierick a small picture once belonging to Mr. Schöff Brentano, of Frankfort. It is painted like the legendary panels of the Hague. The subjects are, "The Prophecy of the Sybil of Tibur to the Emperor Augustus;" and a Madonna and Child. The scenes are laid in an apartment of Flemish architecture. Several figures, supposed by Mr. Passavant to be portraits, surround the Virgin. Two portraits in the collection of Prince Demidoff, a male and a female, were sold in 1870 as Stuerbout's. They were previ-

<sup>1</sup> No. 48, Brussels Catalogue. 0.98 m. high by 1.88 m. broad. Ascribed by Waagen to Dierick Bouts;—an untenable opinion.

<sup>2</sup> No. 60, Museum of the Hague. Wood.

<sup>3</sup> No. 51, Cab. IV. Munich Pinak. Catalogue. Wood, 1' 6" 9''' high by 1' 1" 9''' broad.

<sup>4</sup> No. 52, Cab. IV. Munich Pinak. Catalogue. Wood, 1' 1" 6''' high by 9" 9''' broad.

<sup>5</sup> No. 467, Madrid Catalogue. 2 ft. 4 in. 6. high by 1 ft. 11 in. 6. broad; wood.

<sup>6</sup> "Une petite Nostre Dame fait de la main de Dierick."—*Inventaire de Marguerite d'Autriche, De Laborde, u. s., p. 29.*

ously assigned to another master. At a sale of Mr. Abel's Collection at Stuttgart, the Berlin Museum is said to have bought two rounds,<sup>1</sup> representing scenes from the life of Joseph. Two panels in the Ursulines of Bruges represent scenes from the legend of St. Ursula, and are assigned to Dierick.

Of Albert Bouts we have note in the manuscript of Molanus, who assigns to him an "Assumption of the Virgin" in the lesser choir of St. Pierre at Louvain; but the picture is no longer to be found.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. 1.40 in diameter—1. Joseph sold, and the brother with the dress before Jacob.— 2. Joseph and Potiphar.

<sup>2</sup> Molanus, u. s., and Van Even's Thierry Bouts. p. 23.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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### PROGRESS OF THE ART IN FLANDERS.—ITS INFLUENCE ABROAD.

It is clear, from the foregoing narrative, that the arts in Belgium began to flourish immediately after the accession of the house of France to the throne of Burgundy. Elements of strength which existed before their time, required but their vigour to acquire development. What Flanders wanted up to that time was the peace and order which the stronghanded policy of the Dukes produced. Under Louis de Male and his immediate predecessors, Flanders and its cities rose to great commercial and manufacturing importance; but the Counts of Flanders had neither power nor prestige to keep within due bounds the unruly spirit of their cities. They provoked it, on the contrary, by attempts to wrest from them their fairest privileges, and turned the energies of the people from the pursuit of riches to that of redressing wrongs. They had all to lose in such a struggle, threatening as it did their only source of wealth—the trade of their dominions. The Flemish *communes* were as rich as they were powerful; to have conciliated, instead of exciting their hostility, should have been the aim of skilful rulers. But the principles which governed the communes were not quite reconcileable with those of the *noblesse*; and on one great question they were especially at variance. On the Rhine, where each petty prince

swelled his revenue by erecting toll-bars and impeding trade, commerce flourished in spite of these hindrances. In Flanders, trade was in the hands of the municipalities, which manufactured the raw material, and governed the ports. The duties levied on foreign produce enriched their coffers, and not the exchequer of the princes. To wrest these ways and means from the communes was the ceaseless effort of the Counts of Flanders; they quarrelled with their people, and then sought foreign aid for their subjection. France, ever jealous of possessing these rich and important provinces; at all times afforded them assistance. England, on the other hand, too anxious for their welfare to leave them without aid, encouraged them in their struggles against the Counts and France. The Flemish nobles, consisting not alone of those who lived "en chasteaux forts," as Guicciardini says, but of the patricians, who also boasted of descent, took part in general against the communes, and formed the adverse factions of the "Leliarts," or partisans of the Lily, and the "Clauwerts," or wielders of cleavers. For years the Clauwerts asserted their superiority in arms against the Leliarts; they triumphed at the battle of the Spurs, where the flower of French chivalry was routed and destroyed; and they kept up their ascendancy even against Louis de Male, their last Count.

Nothing at this time exceeded the wealth and power of the cities. Bruges, which at first was but a church upon an island, had grown at the Crusades into a fortress with battlement and drawbridge. The church of St. Donatian occupied the centre of a fortified square, and there the Counts, like Baldwin of the Iron Arm, and Guy de Dampierre, were wont to hear mass.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> "Histoire de Bruges." Bruges, 8<sup>o</sup>. 1850. p. 20.

waters which surrounded the old citadel, or Bourg, were formed into canals, the chief of which was broad and deep, and communicated with the port of Sluys. That port was also fortified, and the channel was deep enough to admit the largest vessels.

Philip Augustus, after his return from the crusades, sent a powerful fleet to Sluys, and forced the entrance. The booty was so great as to astonish him; it comprised tons of manufactured goods, and raw material. Unfortunately for him an English squadron hove in sight, and Philip burnt his fleet and plunder; but the riches which he found are a proof of the wealth collected by the merchants of the time.

England always took a special interest in Bruges; and every effort of the Counts of Flanders to coerce the communes brought the British kings to her support. The trade of Bruges and Ghent was thus increased by rivalry between the communes and the princes. The first of these advantages was the importation, free, of woollens from England, the mere hint of stopping which was a signal for tumult throughout the entire breadth of the country. Then came, in 1127, the privilege of a Hanse<sup>1</sup>. This, which was called the English Hanse, because its counter was in London, was granted to the people of Bruges when William of Normandy attempted to deprive the Flemish cities of their fundamental rights.

The merchants of the Hanse were privileged to try their civil actions before arbitrators chosen amongst the merchants of the city. The president in London was a citizen of Bruges, who took the title of Count of the Hanse, and all the towns had members. Those which

<sup>1</sup> Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Hist. de Flandre*, 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1847. vol. II. p. 291.



joined the company at first were Ypres, Damme, Lille, Bergues, Furnes, Orchies, Bailleul and Poperinghe; it was afterwards reinforced by St. Omer, Arras, Douai, Cambrai, Valenciennes, Peronne, St. Quentin, Beauvais, Abbeville, Amiens, Montreuil, Rheims, and Châlon.

This English Hanse, the Hanse Towns, the merchants of Lombardy and Venice, and those of Novgorod, kept up the prosperity of Bruges by their trade, and the erection of spacious counters there. The fair of Bruges was usually crowded with traders from every country in the world.<sup>1</sup>

Torn by civil dissensions, Bruges, and the other Flemish cities had neither choice nor leisure to foster art and bring it to the high perfection which it afterwards attained under the Dukes of Valois. Philip the Hardy, John the Fearless, and Philip the Good, wielding more powerful resources than the Counts of Flanders, and backed by the agricultural districts of Burgundy, were enabled to quell, in a great degree, the turbulence of their cities. The wealth which they had amassed was partly expended in the peaceful rivalry which arose between the noblesse and citizens, who contended for the palm of taste in art. Thus the school of Bruges progressed. It is true that previous to this time the civic authorities of Belgian cities were already known for their partiality to public exhibitions of their power and taste; but these were far less comprehensive than later efforts of the same description. The ceremonies incident to the arrival in Bruges of Thierry d'Alsace, with the relic of the Holy Blood, were marked by a display of tapestries and banners, creditable to the age in which they were produced;<sup>2</sup> but public taste then

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. de Bruges, u. s., p. 31.

showed itself more frequently in sumptuous apparel and gorgeous stuffs than in works of art. Under Louis de Male, the public appreciation of what required a more refined attention and cultivation was increased. That prince perceiving the progress of this feeling, founded, as has been seen, the Corporation of St. Luke, at Bruges.<sup>1</sup>

The school which then arose so rapidly to perfection under the Dukes of Burgundy, thus owed a portion of its progress to the wealth and independent spirit of the communes. The taste, power, and cultivation of a court gave it an additional spur, and the clergy, threw in their weight to favour the movement.

The monastic orders, as we have shown, had followed art with far less fervour than their neighbours. Scarce a monk in Flanders wielded brush or pencil, when Beato Angelico filled the cities of his native country with examples of his skill. They had even then surrendered to the lay brotherhoods, or freemasonries of architecture, the building of their churches and cathedrals, and they sought the aid of the sister art to decorate internally the countless structures which had been produced by those talented bodies. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries had seen the rise of numerous abbeys throughout Burgundy and Flanders. In those of Burgundy the rigid system of Citeaux prevailed; but in Flanders, the monks enjoyed an easier *régime*. The wealth of these enormous abbeys consisted chiefly in their wool, with which they served, in partnership with England, the looms of the Flemish cities. Their power grew with riches, and many of these Flemish convents were more arrogant in the exhibition of it than even the noblesse. The abbots of Sithiu, the

<sup>1</sup> Delepierre (O.), *Galerie d'Artistes Brugeois*, 8°. Bruges, 1840, p. 6. Sanderus, *Fland. Illust.* u. s., tom. II. p. 148.

abbey of St. Bertin at St. Omer, owned large tracts in Flanders; they held the town of Poperinghe, a large and wealthy manufacturing community; their priories were to be found in many other places, and they claimed the right of consecration from no less a dignitary than a bishop. Their richly ornamented dresses, sleek mules, and obesity of aspect, proclaimed at once their riches and their power of enjoying the good and tasteful things of this world;<sup>1</sup> to them the arts were much indebted for support and countenance. In the cities, the same desire to enrich their churches and cathedrals invariably procured for painters commissions from the chapters; and the guilds of art, invariably possessed a chapel, where the mass was sung at festivals by grateful priests. One need but point to the numerous productions ordered by the abbeys and the chapters, from the ablest painters of the period, to show how much the arts were then indebted to them for support.

The three great powers in the state,—the court, the clergy, and the commune,—were thus enlisted in support of art in Flanders, during the rule of the house of France in Belgium.

Not alone in painting was this result obtained. The greatest monuments of civil architecture, the great town-halls, the bourses, markets, and corporation palaces of Belgium, are the produce of this period.

The civil structures of the thirteenth and preceding centuries are the "*beffrois*," at the ringing of whose bells the trades assembled in the market-place. The "*beffroi*" was the emblem of municipal freedom. It was part of

<sup>1</sup> A. Wauters, *Les Délices de la Belgique*, 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1846. Altmeyer, *Notice sur Poperinghe*. *Messenger des Sciences et des Arts*, u. s., 1839, pp. 22—53.

the charter of incorporation of a commune that it should have a bell, and, consequently, a belfry; but later, when the powers of the corporations became administrative and more complicated, the town-halls arose, sometimes by the belfry's side, sometimes on its site.<sup>1</sup> The Bruges town-hall is the earliest and most perfect specimen of this early style of building, having been raised in the fourteenth century, on the model of those mansions called "Steene," which existed at that time throughout the country.<sup>2</sup> The latter end of the fourteenth, and beginning of the fifteenth, mark the erection of the town-halls of Brussels, Louvain, and Gand; the end of the fifteenth, and beginning of the sixteenth, that of the town-halls of Audenarde, Mons, Courtrai, and Leau.

The building of many palaces in Bruges is due to the exertions of foreign merchants. There were sixteen counters in Bruges, belonging to trading companies, which possessed palaces for the transaction of business. The finest of these was the counter of the German Hanseatic League, destroyed a little less than a century ago. Those of the Castilians, Florentines, and Genoese, were remarkable for the beauty of their fronts. They were castellated and flanked with towers. The hotel of the Genoese was especially remarkable for its internal splendour.<sup>3</sup> Portinari, of the Florentines, patronised Van der Goes. The Genoese seem to have respected the talent of Van der Weyden. The Flemish pictures in Spain show that the Castilians appreciated Flemish art; and the pictures of the School of Bruges are

<sup>1</sup> Schayes, *Hist. de l'Architecture en Belgique*, 8<sup>o</sup>. Brux. 1850, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 10—33. Wauters (A.) *Les Délices de la Belgique*.

<sup>3</sup> Schayes, *u. s.*, pp. 41—56. Many miniatures of this period in the British Museum, contain drawings of these castellated towers.

numerous in Bremen, Lübeck, Dantzic, and other cities of the Hanseatic League.

Of the social status of the artists in the 14th and 15th centuries, little need be added. It can scarcely be called independent, but it was happy. The early formation of guilds in all the towns shows that they had a position of importance in the country. The existence and organisations of guilds of art have been mentioned. Each city was jealous of the other, and kept up a species of opposition and protection. The guild of Brussels was once well-nigh ruined by litigation with the guild of Antwerp, whose "masters" insisted on sending pictures for exhibition to the Brussels fair. The same thing happened later, between Ghent and Antwerp. The painters of the latter city, and others in the Netherlands, sent pictures to the market at Ghent; and the sheriffs of the town ordered that no invasion of the kind should be permitted; and that, within four years from 1653, foreign painters should be prohibited from sending pictures to any but the annual fairs.

Evelyn describes a fair at Rotterdam, "so furnished with pictures, that he was amazed." "The reason," he adds, "for this store of them, and their cheapness, proceeded from the want of land to employ stock; so that it was an ordinary thing to find a common farmer lay out two or three thousand pounds in this commodity. Their houses were full of them, and they vended them at their fairs to very great gains."<sup>1</sup>

Guicciardini states that the most ancient brotherhood of Antwerp was that of La Violière, whose members were mostly painters, esteemed there as at Malines, amongst the most notable of all the trades.<sup>2</sup> "The Pand,

<sup>1</sup> Evelyn's Diary.

<sup>2</sup> Guicciardini, *Descrip. de Tous les Pays Bas.*, u.s., p. 123.



or market for pictures at Antwerp," according to Guicciardini and Boussingault, "was a splendid edifice."<sup>1</sup>

It was, probably, not till the sixteenth century, that the trade in pictures became so large; but it is evident that painters were considered most respectable members of trades. The attention paid them by princes and merchants is a proof of this; and the account which has been given of their privileges at Brussels, in the life of Van der Weyden, shows that they obtained even superior rights to the architects of that city.

The influence which Flemish art indubitably wielded, has been shown in many portions of Italy, on the Rhine, in Westphalia, on the Danube, in Swabia, France, Portugal, and Spain.

It soon supplanted the school fostered at Cologne.

The pictures of the early time, at Cologne, have a certain charm; some of them, in St. Severus, have all the faults peculiar to an infant art. The long, stark figures want the semblance of motion; yet angles and straight lines, clumsy joints, and hands and feet, may be pardoned in consideration of the simple elegance and grace which mark the attitudes. In the "Crucified Saviour" there is a force of truth, which the later masters of the school were unsuccessful in approaching.

But, perhaps, the noblest form in which the talent of an early painter shows itself, is in the "Virgin" of the "Seminary;" and no artist of the 14th century, in Germany or Flanders, gave so much benignity or grace to the Virgin; such simple elegance to the spare and lightly hanging folds which cover her; or to the hair, which falls in wreaths about a forehead full of majesty; no painter of the age was more happy in the creation of a light, clear and lucid transparence.

<sup>1</sup> Boussingault, *Voyage des Pays Bas*, 12<sup>o</sup>, Paris, 1677.

The evidence which connects this and other early pictures with the name of Wilhelm of Cologne is by no means conclusive; but there is no reason to doubt that Wilhelm lived at the period when they were painted, and still less reason to doubt that Wilhelm was the most skilful Rhenish artist of his time. For a considerable period our knowledge of this ancient craftsman was confined to a notice in the Limburg chronicle, which described him "as the very best painter in all the German lands;" but the industry and patience of an indefatigable literary pioneer, Mr. Merlo of Cologne, was rewarded twenty years ago by the discovery of his actual existence.<sup>1</sup> Between 1358, the date of his first appearance, and 1378, the date of his death, the name of Wilhelm de Herle was discovered in scabinal records treating of possessions in land and houses. The title of "Magister Pictor" was found in some cases appended to the name; but there were no traces of commissions for pictorial work. The further discovery made in 1859 by Dr. Ennen of Cologne, that between 1370 and 1380 "Magister Wilhelmus" was painter to the city, and numerous entries of payments for the delivery of banners and wimples as well as for mural designs in numerous edifices, cleverly completed the chain of evidence, which had previously remained so hopelessly imperfect. Amongst the entries alluded to we should particularly notice those which refer to monumental compositions, such as "the painting of a *librum juramentorum*," "an image of the Holy Virgin by St. Cunibert," and a "St. Christopher near the butcheries;" but the most important is that which refers to the painting of the town hall or "*domus civium*," an

<sup>1</sup> Merlo. *Die Meister der Altkölnischen Malerschule*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Köln, 1852, pp. 31. 32. 33.

edifice recently restored to some of its old splendour, and still decorated with fragments of 14th century frescos.<sup>1</sup> It is in the Hanseatic Hall of the Cologne Rathhaus that antiquaries believe, and we think with reason, that they have found remnants of Wilhelm's works. There we find the southern wall still adorned with statues of Hector, Julius Cæsar, Alexander the Great, Joshua, David, Simon Maccabæus, Godfrey of Bouillon, king Arthur, and Charlemagne; opposite to these, fragments of nine figures of life size, of which three heads only have been rescued from destruction. It is impossible to form a perfect idea of the talents of the master from these remains, but they lead us to think that the artist who painted them was a man who, considering the time in which he lived, was possessed of great powers. We cannot affirm that the same hand executed these frescos and the Virgin of the Seminary, but there is no ground for utterly rejecting such a presumption. Passing to other examples related to that of the Virgin just mentioned, we should notice the Virgin and Child with saints, in the Museum of Cologne, in which gentleness marks the face and expression of the Madonna, and a quaint slenderness characterises the forms of saints, draped in vestments of comparatively simple fold.<sup>2</sup> We may admit that the Virgin of the Seminary is nobler and more serenely dignified than its counterpart in the Museum, but the Virgin of the Museum, on the other hand, is to be admired for a feeling of elegance not to be found in the rival figure of the Seminary.

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Ennen's "Meister Wilhelm" in *Annalen des Historischen Vereins für den Nieder-Rhein*. Siebentes Heft. Köln 1859.

<sup>2</sup> Cologne Museum. No. 12. Triptych. Wood; centre 1 f. 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> h. by 1 f. 1. Wings 1 f. 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> h. by 0 f. 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. Virgin and Child between St. Catharine and St. Barbara on gold ground.

In the spirit of these early works, and doubtless one of the best creations of the older masters of the school of which we are treating, is the fragment of a triptych representing saints under canopies, in possession of Mr. Beresford Hope in London. There is a reminiscence here of old miniature art in composition and shape, but a great improvement in the same art in vigour of colours, or energy of expression, qualities conspicuous in the Van Eycks and in Martin Schön.

The picture of Mr. Hope has the form common to that school, the painted architecture in the midst of which the figures stand, the character, the features and the attitudes of the persons represented, and the warm reddish tone of the colour. The latter defect is distinctly attributable here to the coloured oleo-resinous varnish with which the tempera is covered. The small dimensions of the triptych diminish the effect of exaggeration and disproportion produced by larger pictures in the same manner, and which exist here to a certain extent. The representation of the Virgin is graceful, that of the male saints faulty and approaching to caricature, chiefly in the lines which make out the forms, in the beards which adorn the chins, in the large and aquiline noses, and the stare of the open eyes. The same faults are visible likewise in other figures, such as that of the king on the closed panel and that of the Saviour. The picture is, on the whole, creditable to the school of Cologne, and would alone prove that the Van Eycks and Memling took some of their peculiarities of manner from it. One figure indeed of a king in the Adoration has some distant resemblance to that of Hubert Van Eyck, not only in attitude but in dress and energetic expression.

The followers of the first great artist of Cologne strove in vain to imitate his manner. They used the old materials—panels primed and stretched with canvas. On these they painted with a pale and unsubstantial water-colour, which they fixed at last with a varnish, preserving and giving vigour to the picture. But they lost the grace and elegance of the founders of the school, and exaggerated their defects; and, whilst the eyes and other features became defined by unnatural lines, the work exhibited but feeble knowledge of anatomy. An instance of this may be seen in the “Crucified Saviour” of the Cologne Museum, in which the cross stands in the middle, and on each side are the Virgin and apostles, whilst numerous little angels, whose wings have been shorn by the restorers, flutter about the gold ground. This picture, also, may be mentioned as an instance of the practice then so common, of combining painting with the more material art of sculpture.<sup>1</sup>

A picture of the “Passion,” now in the cathedral, may be cited amongst the feeblest efforts of the painters of this early period; but it has a claim to some attention, from the state to which it is reduced by time, exposing the mode in which these men prepared their panels and worked upon them.

Albert Dürer, in his diary, says:—“Item. I paid two silver pennies to have the picture opened, which master Stephen painted at Cologne.”<sup>2</sup> Until recently Stephen of Cologne was only known by this slight entry in the diary of Dürer. It is said that he painted the great altar-piece of the “Adoration of the Magi,” now in the cathedral of Cologne, and once the ornament of the chapel of the Rathhaus.

<sup>1</sup> Cologne Mus. No. 13. Wood, 5 f. 3 h. by 7 f. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Alb. Dürer, Reliquien, u. s., p. 102.



Favoured with the clue afforded by Dürer, Mr. Merlo again proceeded some years since to search the records of his native city, and discovered that, in 1442, a native of Constance, a painter, called Stephen Loethener, was settled in Cologne with his wife Lysbeth.<sup>1</sup> He had bought a house called Roggendorp, in which he resided till 1444. His means apparently increasing, he sold the Roggendorp and bought a larger tenement called "zum Carbunckel," and established his studio in it. This purchase exceeded his means, and he was obliged to borrow money; he secured its repayment by consenting to a rent charge of ten Rhenish florins per annum. His position gradually improved until 1448, when the guild of St. Luke chose him to represent their corporation in the senate. This new dignity probably caused Stephen to incur increased expenses. His means certainly became straightened. A new loan became necessary in 1448, and Loethener mortgaged his house and promised to pay yearly ten Rhenish florins as a perpetual charge. In 1451 the guild again chose him to represent their body in the senate, but this was the painter's ruin apparently; for he retired before the expiration of his legal tenure of office, and the mortgagee seized his house. Quad in the "*Teutscher Nation Herrligkeit*"<sup>2</sup>—says, "that Albert Dürer on his way down (to Flanders) came to a powerful city (Cologne), and was invited by the authorities to look at a noble picture (Stephen's)." He admired it greatly whereupon he was tauntingly informed that the artist had died in a hospital. Was it not strange, he was told, that men should be found willing to follow so poor

<sup>1</sup> Merlo (J. J.) *Die Meister der Alt-kölnischen Malerschule*. p. 110 to 121.

<sup>2</sup> Quad. ap. Merlo.—*Nachrichten von dem Leben und den Werken Kölner Künstler*. 8<sup>o</sup>. Köln 1850. p. 438.



THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI.

Altar-piece by Stephen Loethener in the Cathedral of Cologne





a profession and one leading to such a pitiful end. Dürer made a quaint reply, and there the matter ended.

The subject of Stephen's picture, or rather of Loethener's picture, supposing the two men to be identical, is the "Adoration of the Magi" in the centre, and the patron saints of the city on the wings. That on the right hand contains St. Gereon and his attendants; the left, St. Ursula and eleven virgins; the closed shutters display an Annunciation.

No styles were more divergent than those of Wilhelm and Stephen; and it is impossible to tell whether the latter followed the discipline of the former. But, whilst in Wilhelm one discovers length and meagreness as specially characteristic, a small, stout class of personages figures in the panels of Stephen. As the lofty pointed style of architecture, exhibited in the cathedral, contrasts with the low and Saxon build of St. Gereon's, so the pictures of the two great painters of Cologne contrast with one another. The parallel maintains itself in every detail.<sup>1</sup> Whilst Wilhelm's heads are long and grave, those of Stephen are round and happy. Where the eyes of the first appear exaggerated in their obliqueness, those of the second seem exaggerated in roundness. In every point the later painter shows a less noble spirit; he paints lips pouting and rosy—eyebrows arched and thick—figures obese and bandy, pointing their feet downwards, as if they trod on tiptoe. The fingers of the hands are thick and coarse. In one

<sup>1</sup> Ce maître (Wilhelm) subissait avec naïveté la domination de l'architecture. Stephan .... me paraît marquer une époque différente et indique d'autres traditions. Il substitue aux proportions de l'ogive adoptées par Wilhelm celles du plein cintre .... Il raccourcit les corps tout en leur laissant la finesse; il arrondit les têtes. Fortoul. *Art en Allemagne*, 8<sup>o</sup>. Paris 1844. vol. I. p. 137.

great feature one sees the same result in the two painters. They both excelled in female portraiture; they both gave elegance to the female head; and Stephen was successful in twisting round the hair, and setting off female heads with its assistance. The draperies of Stephen are more studied and more finished, but not gracefully modelled. As to colour, Stephen painted softly, with much body, and with considerable smoothness and rounding of tints; but his work was clear, like Wilhelm's, and not vigorous in *chiaro-scufo*. The finest group in the altar-piece is that of the kneeling King, and the "Virgin and Child." Indeed, the naked form of the latter is especially deserving of attention and admiration. The Virgin of the "Annunciation" is remarkable for natural movement and graceful action; but, like all the rest, the delineation wants vigour and *chiaro-scufo*. Certain marks which are found upon this altar-piece have been supposed to represent the date of 1410; the style of the picture is that of the first half of the fifteenth century.

There were numerous imitators of the manner of Stephen, as there were of that of Wilhelm; but all inferior to him. The only production of the master, besides the altar-piece of the Cathedral, is a small Madonna and Child, surrounded by numerous angels, in the Museum of Cologne, of which the draperies are peculiarly soft and pleasing.<sup>1</sup> Of his imitators, a fair example is to be found in the "Last Judgment" of the same collection.<sup>2</sup>

Hitherto, art on the Rhine was original. Flemish influence was distinguishable later; and Van der Wey-

<sup>1</sup> Cologne Mus. No. 87. Wood, 1 f. 4  $\frac{1}{4}$  h. by 1 f. 2, gold ground.

<sup>2</sup> Cologne Mus. No. 90 fr. St. Laurentius of Cologne. W. 3 f. 10  $\frac{1}{2}$  h. by 5 f. 5  $\frac{1}{2}$ .



den was the man whose style most tended to disturb old traditions. We find no trace of a direct substantial contact between the two schools; but a close observer will not fail to discover how strongly Van der Weyden's compositions became impressed upon the artists of Cologne; amongst the rest, the great "Descent from the Cross" will be found to have been copied, altered, and recopied in various ways. The men of the Rhine did not imitate with servility; but they varied, or modified their style in course of time, until they reverted to imitations of those great features which a man like Wilhelm indelibly impresses on his pupils and followers; they gradually returned to the long, thin forms of their first founder, without regaining his elegance and nobleness. The school was thus reduced to lifeless mediocrity when the "Deposition from the Cross," which may yet be seen at the Wallraffische Museum was executed. This picture bears the date of 1499, and has been given to Israel Meckenen and Albert Van Ouwater;<sup>1</sup> it has been shown how difficult it would be to maintain the name of Albert; Israel Meckenen whose claims have also been urged was born at Meckenen between Zütphen and Cleves, and is known solely by his engravings. There is nothing in common between him and the pictures, except the period of production. The date of his birth is 1440, and that of his death 1503; and, therefore, had he been a painter, he might have produced the "Deposition"; but there is no proof whatever, either that he painted at all, or that this particular work is his; and, in so far as the panels attributed to him can be examined and compared,

<sup>1</sup> Vide antea, p. 198 and 247.

there is not one of them which is not distinctly different in age and handling; though they are all of the same defective style. The time in which they were produced appears to have been the middle or the latter portion of the fifteenth century—at the period of transition, when the school of Bruges and that of Louvain were mingled in Cologne, and formed a vulgar cento. That the craftsmen of Louvain and those of the Rhine were wont to fraternize is evident from their works, but the names of all these painters remain unknown. It is true that a master of Cologne is noticed in 1478, as having done considerable honour to the school at the time in which the writer lived; this notice is discovered in the “Memorials of Zwolle,” to the following effect: “Eodem tempore aderat quidam devotissimus juvenis, dictus Johannes de Colonia, qui dum esset in seculo pictor fuit optimus et aurifaber.”<sup>1</sup> But the artist’s name is found upon no panels or pictures of that time. Numerous pieces, however, illustrate the school up to 1499, when it seems to disappear. Of these, a few have been brought together at Linz, Munich, Minden, Nördlingen, and Cologne. The pictures of Linz are, perhaps, the best of the transition period, and appear to have been painted in the days of Van der Weyden; those of Munich, where the schools have been classified without much care, and where the works of Wilhelm were long confused with those of Stephen, are also curious. In the triptych of the “Marriage of the Virgin” there, which of old bore the name of Meckenen, the mixture of the Rhenish and Flemish may be

<sup>1</sup> Archiv voor kerkelyke geschiedenis inzonderheid den Uxderlandte, Leyden, 1835, tom. ii. p. 295. apud De Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne, u. s., Introd. vol. ii. p. 11.

seen;<sup>1</sup> whilst the painter displays forms of composition as eminently Flemish as his landscape distances, he colours them in the manner of Cologne. The landscape distance is a repetition of that in the "Martyrdom of St. Erasmus" at Louvain. The "Crucified Saviour," in the same collection, may be cited as another example of Van der Weyden's style of composition.<sup>2</sup> The designer of these subjects is the same whose panels were christened in the Gallery of Lyversberg, at Cologne by the name of the "Master of the Passion," and at Minden, by that of the "Master of Werden." The pictures of the "Master of the Passion," formerly in the Baumeister and Von Lyversberg collections, were called, till very lately, by the name of Meckenzen; but have since been christened after the subject which they represent.<sup>3</sup> Those formerly at Minden, in the collection of Councillor Krüger, representing St. Hubert, St. Augustin, St. Hubert, and St. Maurice;—the Conversion of St. Hubert, St. Jerome, St. Augustin, St. Ægidius, and a Carmelite, are named from the monastery in which they were discovered.<sup>4</sup> The same hand appears to have produced the mural temperas in Santa Maria Capitolina at Cologne, which are also called Meckenzen. As for the Crucifixion of 1499, although it also was christened by the name of the ubiquitous engraver, it exhibits a manner imitated from that of Van der Weyden, with a colour in the cold and far from pleasant tones of the latest artists of Cologne. It was, in fact, by far the weakest, and, apparently, the last effort of the school.

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 20, 21, 22, Cab. II. Pinakothek Catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> No. 30. Cab. II. Pinakothek Catalogue.

<sup>3</sup> Catalogue of the ex-Lyversberg Collection.

<sup>4</sup> Catalogue of Councillor Krüger's Gallery at Minden. Nos. 26, 27, 28, 29. Till 1860 in the National Gallery, Nos. 250 to 253.

The influence of Flemish art, which thus, apparently, put an end to that particular branch which flourished at Cologne, was extended farther into Germany towards the sixteenth century, and produced a style no longer similar to that which picture-fanciers called Meckenlen, but which, for want of any name, was classed as that of Lucas of Leyden. Pictures of this kind, of which it is needless to define the manner, were very numerous. Many are to be found in continental galleries, such, for instance, as the panels at Cologne, once the property of Mr. Lyversberg, and now belonging to Mr. Hamm. They represent the Incredulity of St. Thomas in the centre, Mary and St. John on one wing, St. Alfred and St. Hippolytus on the other. Outside, are St. Simphorosa and her seven sons, and St. Felicity and her seven sons.<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to say that this triptych is not by Lucas of Leyden, than whom no one produced, or left a fewer number of pictures. Lucas, in truth, was scarcely more a painter than Meckenlen. His time was spent in the handling of the graver—not the brush. The composer of these pictures, who exhibits many of the special characteristics of a Fleming, with a mixture of the dry, clear German manner, was, in every likelihood, an artist of the early portion of the sixteenth century. His composition is rich, though his figures are not marshalled in good order; he is also marked by heaviness and profusion of ornamentation; jewellery and precious stones abound; and could one trace in any way a record of its author, it might appear that, like Johannes of Cologne, he was a goldsmith “aurifaber,” dragging into pictures the material fancies of another branch of art. Pollaiuolo was an “orafo,” and abounded in similar particularities. The painter

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 35, 36, 37, ex-Lyversberg Coll. Cat.

now considered is remarkable, besides, for a manner of reducing figures in their stature, by increasing, beyond measure, the length and girth of the head; he also drew large hands and feet, and lacked chiaro-'scuro; in colour he was cold and abrupt. There are other pictures from the painter's hand in the same collection.<sup>1</sup> The Louvre contains one, where Van der Weyden's "Descent from the Cross" is repeated, and slightly altered; the comparatively warm tone of its colour has induced the attribution of the panel to Quintin Massys, but there are no real grounds for this.<sup>2</sup>

Whilst the Flemish influence thus spread over Germany, the painters of Cologne, at second hand, pursued a similar direction, and sensibly effected the artists of Westphalia and of Augsburg. In the latter city they left their impress on the Holbeins, whose works are too well known to need discription here.

In Westphalia, the masters of most practice remained obscure; yet the oldest convents still preserve their traces in halls and refectories. Amongst these, the monastery of Liesborn was the most remarkable for containing numerous early pictures, which Mr. Krüger purchased for his gallery at Minden. The painter's name, by general consent, is now the Master of Liesborn. He was a limpid, feeble, and unenergetic painter, behind the Flemings in finish, and behind the Kölners in firmness and vigour.<sup>3</sup>

The Swabian was another school, contemporary with those of Wilhelm and Van Eyck, which left one painter only—Zeitblom—to express its genius. Zeit-

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 40, 41, 42, ex-Lyversberg Coll. Cat. They represent St. John the Baptist, and St. Cecilia, and St. Alexis, and St. Agnes.

<sup>2</sup> No. 601, Louvre Cat.

<sup>3</sup> See the pictures of this master in our National Gallery, Nos. 254 to 261.



blom's pictures may be seen at Augsburg and Nuremberg. In Prussia his "St. Peter" and "St. Anne," at Berlin, may be cited as examples,<sup>1</sup> and will show that he kept the common level below Cologne and Belgium. The paintings of this master, in the Moritz Kapelle at Nuremberg, prove him to have had, perhaps, a nobler feeling, and broader hand, than his brethren of Westphalia; but his paintings, like the rest, are unrelieved by light and shade. The influence of Flemish art, slight in the School of Swabia, is impressed more strongly on that of Kalkar. In the sixteenth century, there arose a painter there whose name is that of his native city, and who finished for his parish church an altar-piece of large dimensions. Kalkar's life was curious; his early style, exemplified by the altar-piece just mentioned, was founded on that of the school of Leyden, as expressed by Engelbrechtsen, but improved in some respects, and ennobled by a broader flow of lines—by a riper, and more generous colour.

Kalkar went, somewhat later, into Italy, and proved himself a colourist. Vasari tells us that he painted subjects in the manner of Giorgione and Titian, and so like the style and handling of those masters, that their pictures were frequently confounded. On this account, no doubt, the later efforts of this painter fail us; but his early style was imitated in the neighbouring town of Xanten, where curious traces of the study of the Flemings, and chiefly that of Memling, are found. "St. Anthony's Temptation," in the cathedral, may be mentioned as a proof how closely these pseudo-Flemish painters followed both the school of Bruges and that of Leyden. It is a curious point connected with this

<sup>1</sup> No. 161 A, Berlin Cat.; No. 161 B, *ibid.*

picture, that we find upon it the initials "A. W.," similar to those discovered on a panel once belonging to the Aders Collection, and not unlike, in style, the "Adoration of the Magi" at the Pinakothek of Munich.<sup>1</sup>

The Flemish mode of painting and composition, as impressed upon these lesser German schools at second-hand—and as much by the teaching of the later masters of Cologne as by that of the Flemings themselves—was directly stamped on Martin Schön, the pupil of Van der Weyden. The manner of Martin Schön may be judged from a panel now in the National Gallery the "Burial of the Virgin", which serves to show what a different impress is made on men of talent and mediocrities.<sup>2</sup> Van der Weyden's compositions were used by many of his followers with indiscriminate eagerness. Martin Schön improved upon Van der Weyden's style, and, with characteristic vigour, laid the foundation of the later school of Nuremberg. A small Nativity assignable to him in the collection of the Duke of Tarsia, at Palermo, reveals a large amount of power. Nothing can be finer than the figure of St. Joseph in this diminutive panel; his energetic expression is strongly in contrast with that of figures of the same class in Flemish pictures; yet Flemish peculiarities are here united to those of Schön, which are chiefly vigour of expression and body of colour. The composition is not unusual; the Infant lies on the ground, and is adored by his kneeling mother; St. Joseph stands pensive on the left, while on the right the shepherds enter the penthouse. Another picture by Schön, in the Doria Gallery at Rome, is assigned to Dürer, and re-

<sup>1</sup> No. 45, Room 1, Munich Catalogue, vide antea.

<sup>2</sup> London National Gallery No. 658.

markable for its beautiful warm tone. It represents the death of the Virgin. A marvellous embroidered stole formerly belonging to Pope Marcellus the II<sup>d</sup>, and now in the treasury of the cathedral of Gubbio, is filled with figures quite in the style of Schön; a grand composition of the Last Supper is embroidered on one of the shoulders of the vestment, and seven stories of the Saviour's passion in high relief cover the rest of it. The character of the heads, the nude, the draperies, the firm outlines, are in the finest character of the Flemish works of the time of Martin Schön. The art of the Van Eycks leads up through Van der Weyden, and through Martin Schön, to Albert Dürer; it affected, through the School of Augsburg, the Noric painter Wohlgemuth.

The Belgian manner, which crept so slowly, yet so surely, into every part of Germany, invaded Spain—where legions of its painters, sculptors, architects, migrated to supplant or mingle with Italians. John Van Eyck had, doubtless, spread the desire of possessing pictures by his countrymen; but before his time, the early school of Florence had cast its roots and shed its flowers. There Gherardo di Jacopo Starnina, pupil of Antonio di Vinezia, and born at Florence in 1354, was the first to seek employment from the kings of Spain. He enriched himself, and gained the favour of the Spanish court, and returned to Florence full of honours; but his pictures have since perished; and though the author of the book, entitled "*Les Arts Italiens en Espagne*,"<sup>1</sup> describes an altar-piece of his as still in the Escorial, no such work to be is now found there. The subject was the "Adoration of the Magi." Dello followed Starnina into Spain.

<sup>1</sup> "*Les Arts Italiens en Espagne*", Rome, 1825.

He was a painter and a sculptor, and lived as late as 1455; but his pictures in Spain have been lost. He enriched himself at court, and returned to Florence with a knighthood; but his stay in Italy was short; he quarrelled with the seignory of his native city, returned to Spain, and died there. A single work of Dello is recorded in the book above referred to; it was signed "Dello Eques Florentinus," but cannot now be found. Another piece has perished also; it was a painted cloth, depicting the encounter of the Spaniards with the Moors at the battle of Higuera. Having been found in Philip the Second's time, in the Tower of Segovia, it was copied by his order; and a fresco of it was produced by the Spanish painters, Fabricio and Granelio.<sup>1</sup> It may still be seen in the Hall of Battles at the Escorial; but it scarcely strikes us as a copy after Dello being rather a work of the later and *baroque* period of the seventeenth century.

Had we not historic proofs that Starnina and Dello were in Spain, their stay would be scarcely credible, so faint was its impression on the artists there; for Starnina was a glory of the school of Florence, and Dello no mean artist. But the only traces of Italian art now visible, are to be found in the old cathedral of Salamanca, and in the chapel of St. Blas, in the cathedral of Toledo. The walls of the latter are covered internally with the frescoes of an old painter of the end of the fourteenth century; the chapel itself is one of the finest in the kingdom; and the subject which adorns it is the "Passion of our Saviour."

If Italian painters failed to leave distinct a distinct impress, not so the Flemings; for they soon invaded and monopolized the country. Their influence, at first

<sup>1</sup> Quevedo, u. s., p. 341.

commingled, formed a tasteless cento of Italian and of Belgian art.

Whilst in Germany, the Flemings impressed the pupils of the native schools with the desire to imitate and rival them; in Spain they came in person and painted for the Spaniards, who, in themselves, remained almost incapable of receiving an impression. The struggles of the Moors, and the constant state of war in which the country remained for years, are grounds sufficient for this backwardness of Spain, since the selfsame causes are the sole excuse for the cruelties of Alva, and the horrors of the inquisition.

We see the pictures of a Van Eyck, a Cristus, Jan de Flandes, Juan Flamenco, and Juan de Borgogna, sought for and admired; but the Spaniards only followed art themselves a little later with effect; and even when they did their efforts were but feeble.

Lodovico Dalmão is the first who left a name which figures on a picture in St. Michael of Barcelona. The Virgin is depicted sitting on a throne, holding in her arms the Infant Christ, and adored by civic magistrates in their robes of state. "Sub anno MCCCCXLV. per Ludovicum Dalmão fui depictum," is the signature on this panel. Who was Dalmão? At present we have nothing but this picture to inform us of the life and existence of a painter who appears to have studied in the workshop of Van Eyck. The "Madonna" and the "Infant" prove it by their Flemish type; and the portraits of the magistrates by their likeness to the same class of persons in the Flemish panels of the period. The paintings, further, are in oil.

Gallegos was a Spaniard, who followed Van der Weyden and Memling's manner rather than Van Eyck's. His Madonna in the chapel of St. Clement of



Salamanca is completely in the Flemish manner; and so are other pictures of the same type and class.

Dalmão and Gallegos are the best painters of this time in the country; but there are others of less note, on whom the Flemings left their mark. There are fourteen panels in St. Iago of Toledo, painted in 1498, by Juan de Segovia, Pedro Gumiel, and Sancho de Zamora, in which the faces are inanimate, the eyes black, and the colour dead, as in the worst specimens of Belgium.<sup>1</sup>

Pedro da Cordova painted an altar-piece in the cathedral of Cordova, which bears the date of 1475; the donor was the canon Diego Sanchez de Castro, as appears from the picture's signature; the subject is the "Annunciation and various Saints;" the style, an inspiration from that of Petrus Cristus. Pedro Nuñez painted a Deposition from the Cross, in the chapel of Santa Anna, of the cathedral of Seville, in which we note a similar exaggeration of the Flemish manner.

There are numerous pictures besides these in which the mingling of Italian and Flemish characteristics is discovered; as, for instance, scenes from the New Testament in the chapel of St. Eugenio at Toledo, erroneously attributed to Juan de Borgogna. Juan de Borgogna, who is not to be confounded with Juan Flamenco, painted pictures in the Sala Capitularia of Toledo, the stalls of which are by Cupin d'Olanda. His works are in fresco, and represent the history of

<sup>1</sup> "Hizose este retablo, por mandato de Doña Maria dí Luna, hija de Don Alvaro y Dona Juana; y trabajaron en él los artistas Juan de Segovia, Pedro Gumiel y Sancho de Zamora, segun consta de la escritura otorgada en Manganares en 1498; recibiendo por su trabajo la cantidad de ciento cinco mí maravedis."—*Don José Amador de Los Ríos, Toledo pintoresca*, 4<sup>o</sup>. Madrid, 1845. p. 58.

the Virgin Mary. He is known to have received for them, in 1511, 165,000 maravedis. In him we merely see the effort to produce an imitation of the style of the great Italian masters; sometimes his memory is with Ghirlandaio, sometimes with Perugino; but he does not much recall to mind the manner of the Flemings.

Spanish art in the fifteenth century, thus appears to have had no character of its own, but to have followed the bent of whatever school was nearest to it. Spain could boast, in the sixteenth century, of only two men, both exaggerated in their way—Bosch, who made the Flemish manner ridiculous, and Berruguete, who is an artist of mannerism. The glory of Spain is its modern school.

The Flemish art-invasion seems to have spread, not only into Spain, but into Portugal. We find the following Flemish artists there in the fifteenth century:—Master Huet, in 1430; Guillaume Belles, in 1448; Jean Anne, in 1454; Gil Eannes, in 1465; Jean, in 1485; Christopher of Utrecht, in 1492; Antony of Holland, in 1496; and Oliver of Ghent, in 1496.

A petition, addressed to the king of Portugal, by Garcia Henriquez, a painter, states, that in 1518, his father-in-law, Francis Henriquez, was commissioned by king Emmanuel to decorate the court of justice; but that he died of the plague, as well as seven or eight painters whom he sent for from Flanders.<sup>1</sup>

Jean Lemaire, a French poet of the sixteenth century, and laureate of Margaret of Austria, thus writes of the painters of the Netherlands. (Margaret's crown is being carved):—

<sup>1</sup> See Raczynski, *Les Arts en Portugal*, 8°. Paris, 1846.

"L'orfèvre allant vers son ouvroir très riche,  
 Plusieurs amis le vindrent assiéger,  
 Qui tous ont bruit oultre Espagne et Austriche,  
 Si vont priant priant Mérite n'estre chiche  
 De leur conter, dont il vient si léger.  
 Alors Mérite estant en leur danger  
 Ne peut fuyr, que tout ne leur desploye,  
 Car l'un d'iceux estoit maitre Rogier,  
 L'autre Fouquet, en ce qui tout loz s'emploie.  
 Hugues de Gand qui tant eut les tretz netz,  
 Y fut aussi, et Dieric de Louvain  
 Avec le roi des peintres Johannes,  
 Duquel les faits parfaits et mignonnetz  
 Ne tomberont jamais en oubli vain,  
 Ni si je fusse un peu bon escriptvain,  
 De Marmion, prince d'enluminure,  
 Dont le nom croist comme pasteen levain,  
 Par les effects de sa noble tournure.  
 Il y survint de Bruges Maistre Hans,  
 Et de Frankfort, Maistre Hugues Martin,  
 Tous deux ouvriers tres chers et triomphans  
 Puis de peintre autres nobles enfans,  
 D'Amyens Nicole, ayant bruit argentín,  
 Et de Tournay, plein d'engin celestin  
 Maistre Loys dont tout discret fut l'œil;  
 Et cil, qu'on prise ou soir, et ou matin,  
 Faisans patrons, Baudouyn de Bailleul.  
 Encore y fut Jaques Lombard de Mons  
 Accompagné de bon Lievin d'Anvers,  
 Trestons lesquels, autant nous estimons,  
 Que les anciens, jadis par longs sermons,  
 Firent Parrhase et maints autres divers,  
 Honneur les loge en ses palais couvers."

All these painters are brought together by the poet  
 whilst the goldsmith, in whose place they congregate,  
 is forging the Margaritic crown. He proceeds:—

..... "Lors un Valencennois  
 Gilles Steclin, ouvrier fort autentique,  
 Luy dit ainsi: Maistre, tu me congnois."

Merit here passes an eulogium on Steclin, and gives  
 him the crown to work. The poem then proceeds:—

"Mais il convient, pour entente plus meure,  
 Prier ton père aussi qu'il y besongne,  
 Car chacun sait la main fort propre et seure  
 De Hans Stéclin, qui fut né à Coulongne."

The work is finished, and then exhibited to the spectators, who are asked their opinion:—

“Que t'en semble t'il Adrien Mangot de Tours  
Et toi Romain, Christofle Hiéremie,  
Porta onc roy tel richesse aux estours  
Sur son arme? Je ne le croirais mie.  
Qu'en diras tu Donatel de Florence  
Et toy, petit Antoine de Bordeaux,  
Jean de Nimeghe, ouvrier plein d'apparance,  
Regarde un peu la noble transparance.  
De ces dix corps tant lumineux et beaux.  
Et toy, le bruits des orfèvres nouveaux,  
Robert le noble, illustre Bourguignon  
Viens en juger; Il n'y gist nulz appeaux  
Avec le bon Margeric d'Avignon.

Approche toy, orfèvre du duc Charles,  
Gentil Gantois, Corneille très habile,  
Jean de Rouen, je te pris que tu parles:  
Tu as eu bruit de Paris jusques à Arles  
En l'art fusoire, sculptoire et fabrile;  
Malléatoire aussi tu fu utile,  
D'architecture et de peinture ensemble  
Ou te mélas par tel usage et style  
Que ton engin haut qu'humain ressemble.”

The Margaritic Crown is a strange confusion of names, dates, and places; but the rhymes are curious, as they show the interest still felt in the sixteenth century for the artists of the fifteenth, and because they are the work of a Frenchman. Nor are these the only examples of Flemish painters being made the theme of poetry; in another place, Lemaire mentions them as follows in the legend of the Venetians, which he wrote in 1509.

“J'ay pinceaux mille, et brosses et ostilz  
Et si je n'ay Parrhase ou Apelles  
Dont le nom bruit par mémoires anciennes  
J'ay des espritz récentz et nouvelletz  
Plus ennobliz par leur beaux pinceletz  
Que Marmion, jadis de Vallenciennes  
Ou que Foucquet qui tant en gloire siennes  
Ne que Poyer, Rogier, Hugues de Gand  
Ou Johannes qui tant fût élégant.”

Foucquet, whom Lemaire thus notices, is one of the first French painters who formed his manner in Flanders. Charles the Sixth and Charles the Seventh were fond of art, and patronized its professors, founding for them the Paris Academy of Painting. The Duke of Berry and the Duke of Orleans were equally remarkable for their love of painting. The latter is known to have had in his service Colart of Laon, who laboured for him in the capacity of "peintre et varlet de chambre" in 1395 and 1396; but Colart de Laon appears to have been of that class of painters who adorned wooden carved work with colour. Jean Foucquet came later; and a picture is still left us from which his manner may be judged. It is the portrait of Agnes Sorel, mistress of Charles VII., in the garb of the Virgin Mary, and surrounded by angels with red wings. This, after all, is a repulsive picture, hung up high in the Gallery of Antwerp, where the name of the master is not known, but is unmistakeably Flemish in tone and execution. It is a panel which gives us an imitation of Van der Weyden, and a foretaste of Memling; but is far below the works of these masters. The figure of the Virgin has some of the softness and *élancé* manner of Memling, and the Infant Saviour the heaviness of Van Eyck's representations.<sup>1</sup>

Foucquet was born in 1415, and must have painted this picture before 1450, when Agnes Sorel died. Louis the Eleventh employed him to paint his likeness, in which Foucquet was unsuccessful; and Margaret of Austria seems to have prized a picture of his in her possession, which represented the "Virgin and Child." His style may be judged by the miniatures of the illuminated Josephus in the Paris National Library,

<sup>1</sup> No. 132, Antwerp Gal. m. 0.91 h. by 0.81.



the earliest miniatures of which we saw are by Pol van Limburg and his brethren.

Later still in France was Jehan Cloet, whom we find employed at first in the household of the Duke of Burgundy, in 1475.

The descendants of Cloet flourished in Paris for three generations. His son became painter to Francis the First; and the name of Jean having been lengthened into Jehanet, he gradually became the Jannette of our galleries. The portraits of Francis the First and his Queen, at Hampton Court, will show the style of Jehanet, and the influence exercised upon the early painters of France by the Flemish school. But the love of Francis the First for art was not satisfied by having a painter whose manner had been founded on the teaching of a Fleming. He occasionally sent to Belgium for pictures, dealing, usually, with Jean Du-bois, of Antwerp, to whom we find him paying, on more than one occasion, large sums for pictures.

Slight as was the influence of art in France during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was still more so in England, where the traces of painting are so feeble that the patient research of Vertue almost failed to discover anything worthy of remembrance. It was not till the sixteenth century that numerous Flemish artists migrated from Flanders to England, and gave themselves up chiefly to the production of portraits. The earliest painters of Belgium did not, therefore, exercise any influence in England; and the manner which Cornelis, and Lucas de Heere imported, and made fashionable, was no longer the old and original one inherited from the Van Eycks—but a feeble style, adulterated by commingling with the various schools of Italy and Germany.

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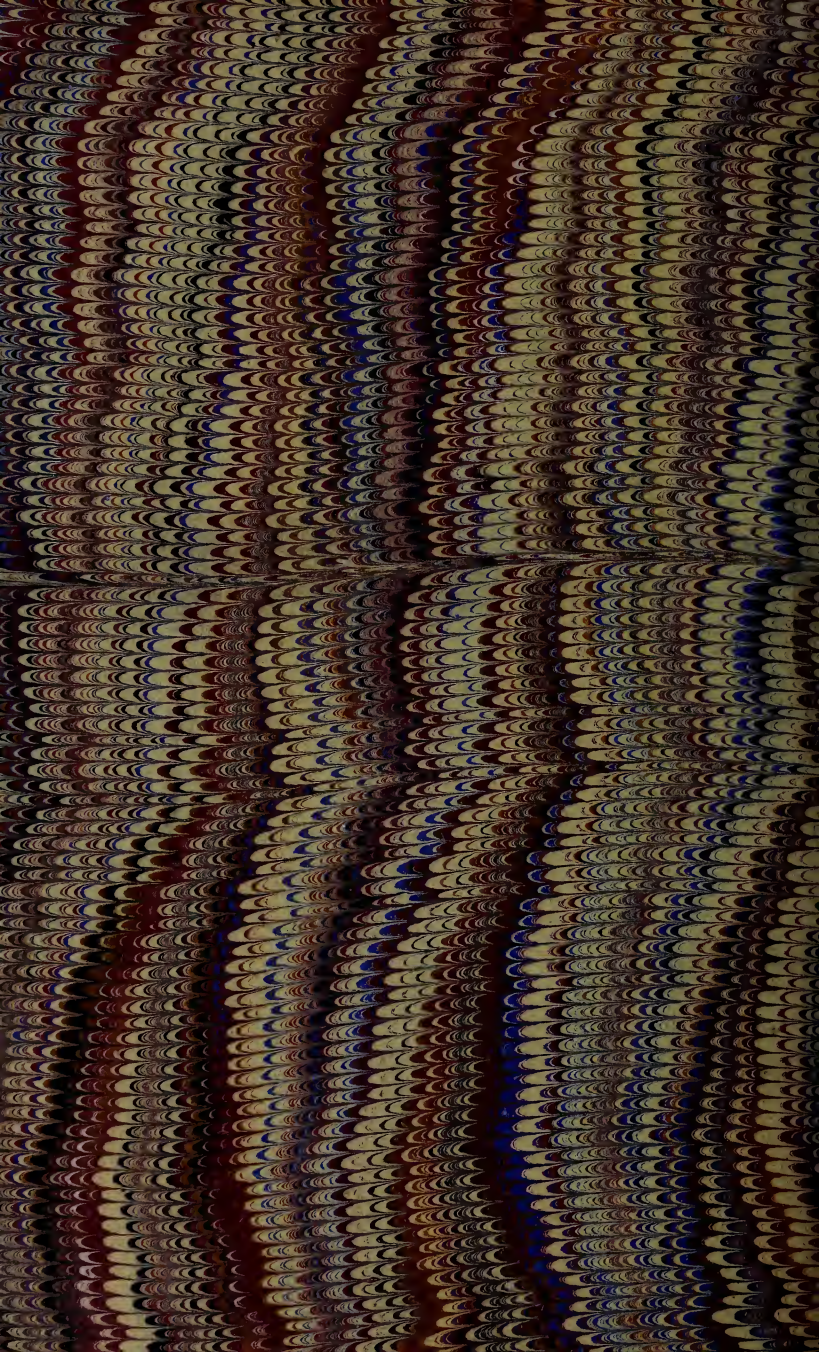
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